

## THE RULING PASSION.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

FROM some cause, Arnold had ceased to urge an immediate departure from his old home, and lingered, day after day, at the farm house, till his guests began to wonder at a change, which, nevertheless, gave them great satisfaction; for, as birds love to hover about the nest where the first brood of love has found shelter, these two ardent and excitable persons could not force themselves away from a house where the pure and deep sensations of a first love had found birth.

After an absence of some days, during which Amy had been at her worst, Arnold came to the Falls again. His old, half-loving, half-imperious manner returned, and, though his visits were always brief, they brought hope and health back to that young creature's heart. She began to smile, and even laugh, again blooming into health like a half-parched rose, after an abundant fall of dew.

Laura was not surprised at these visits; for, with deep craft, Arnold always managed that she herself urged him to make these inquiries after Amy; and, as he seemed to go with reluctance, she only became the more urgent to express, through him, the deep gratitude that really filled her heart, when she thought of the gentle creature who had saved her life. She would gladly have gone to the cabin herself; but Arnold only told the truth, when he said that Amy shrunk from an interview with strangers, and sensitively drew back from all expressions of gratitude for an act which was in itself only an impulse of common humanity.

This was all true. The very thought of meeting that bright, dashing creature again filled Amy's soul with a sort of terror. If the sound of sleigh-bells penetrated to the cabin, she would start and turn pale. If a strange foot sounded on the threshold stone, she would look furtively toward some door, as if impelled to escape.

But when Arnold's step was heard on the snow-path, her cheeks would flush into one bloom of roses, and the smiles that had forsaken her mouth for weeks together came softly back. Her gentle soul was reassured again.

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One night, when Leonard and his wife had gone to a prayer-meeting, Arnold found Amy alone. It was the first time they had been allowed an opportunity to converse together; for, against their usual practice, the old people had, from the time of the accident, invariably kept their places at the hearth, no matter how long the young man lingered there.

Now the two were alone, with nothing but the plunge of the Falls within hearing—with no more dangerous witnesses than the bright hickory wood fire to bear testimony against them. The paper curtains were rolled down; the fire-light danced and shone on the pine ceiling, and the whole floor surrounding them, with a pleasant twilight.

Arnold sat in the great splint-bottomed chair, which Joshua Leonard usually occupied. Amy drew a little stool, covered with patchwork of red and blue cloth, to his feet, and settled down upon it, with a soft flutter of the breath, like a pretty pigeon when its nest is completed.

After all, Arnold loved this good child after a fashion, and might have loved her well but for the ambition which clung around every good impulse of his nature, as parasites check the growth of young trees and at last wither them up.

That night his face was bright and genial. It was pleasant to feel how completely that young creature loved him—to know that with a single word he could fill those blue eyes, looking so innocently into his, with tears, or with a smile deepen the loving sunshine that filled them. Even the thirst of his ruling passion was slaked here. The wish for control, the right of will, had a submissive object in that gentle creature. He could trample on her and she would forgive—forsake her even and she would not avenge. Here he was all supreme.

She looked into his eyes, and her hand nestled itself into his. One elbow was supported by his knee, and her chin rested in the palm of her other hand, which was curved into a cup for its reception. All at once a shadow crept over her face, and she shuddered perceptibly.

"What is it? What are you thinking of, Amy?" said Arnold, pressing the hand in his a little tighter.

"Of that day—of the water. You left me alone, Benedict—all alone to die."

He frowned upon her. "So this is your faith, Amy Leonard?"

"Amy Arnold!" said the young girl, turning white as the name passed her lips. "You must never call me any name but that, when we are alone."

Arnold's face grew black; he lifted her hand, as if to toss it away, but ended in grasping it closer, while his wrath cleared away in a forced laugh.

"Well, Amy Arnold then. It sounds well, doesn't it, little wife?"

Amy gave a little cry. Her head fell forward on his knee, and she began to sob; while deep, warm gusts of joy shook her frame.

"What are you crying for now, Amy?" he said, regarding her with a triumphant smile, while his hand wandered through her thick curls.

She only answered by raising herself softly to his bosom, and resting her head against his heart.

Again he buried his hand in her rich hair, pressing the face closer and closer to his bosom. For one moment his ruling passion was beaten back by the wings of Amy's love-angel.

"Yes, Amy, it is a sweet word—wife—my wife."

"And you will never, never attempt to deny it again?"

He did not answer, but kissed her forehead.

"But you did not mean it?"

"No, love, no, I did not mean it."

"You—you wanted to try me—to be certain I would keep our secret. That was all, Arnold. Tell me that was all; I am sure it was."

"Yes, yes, I wanted to try you."

"And you see—you are satisfied now; for, when you said those cruel things, I did not speak even to my mother. When you left me in the water to die——"

"Stop, child! Don't say that again. I—I thought it was you that filled my arms. How could I tell in the dark? What could I do but seize the first form that rose? I was coming back. It was all a mistake, Amy."

"I know—I see it all now. How selfish—how wicked I was to think it! Forgive me, Benedict, but I was so unhappy—so jealous! I hope you will never know what it is to be heart-sick as I was then."

"Well, well, don't let us think of it. We will

have no more of these scenes. You know that I did not mean anything, and I am sure you will keep our secret."

"See how I have kept it——"

"And always will—I can trust you now, Amy—you will never disobey me."

"No, no," murmured the happy creature, "for you are my husband—my own, own husband."

She trembled blissfully, as the precious word passed her lips for the first time, and stole glances at his face through her gathering blushes.

"You are my husband, and I must obey you. If mother owes duty to my father above all things next to God, I am a wife as well, and must obey everything you tell me. Oh! I am so glad neither mother nor the doctor got anything out of me."

"Did they ask?" cried Arnold, sharply.

"No, no. How could they? But they were both so kind—so anxious about me, and I suffered so with the thought of your leaving me to die, and—and with——"

"With what?"

"With—but you will be angry."

"No, no; say all that is on your mind. It cannot be anything very terrible if you have betrayed no secrets."

"Well, I was so miserable while that lady was in the house."

"Miserably jealous. Foolish child!"

"Yes, I suppose it was that."

"But it is over. You know better now!"

"Yes, oh! yes. I hope so—but—but will she stay in this country long? When will she go back to Canada, or France? I should think she would be homesick."

Arnold laughed, and patted her cheek with his hand.

"Never mind her. Think of something pleasanter for us both, Amy."

"Yes—yes, I'm sure that isn't pleasant; but one can't always put disagreeable things out of the way, or I'd never think of her again."

Arnold smiled. This jealousy, while it threatened nothing, rather pleased him. It was an evidence of his power. The sound of sleigh-bells at a distance made Amy start from the arm which still held her.

"It is my father and mother," she said.

"Yes; but half a mile off yet. Don't be frightened, they shall not find me here."

"No—no, they would see in a minute how happy I am, and guess everything, mother is so smart. You must go away now. But—but——"

"Well, what are you stammering about?"

"Nothing—nothing, only there is a meeting to-morrow night."

"Well, I will come."

"There is a revival now, and our people go all the time; but then if you have company—"

"Never mind that—I'll manage to get here evenings. But remember, Amy, I must have no more distrust: and our secret must be kept. If a suspicion gets abroad, I will never forgive you—never see you again."

"Indeed I can promise now; for did I not keep my word through all that terrible trouble?" she said, cheerfully. "Oh! how near the bells are coming. Here is your great-coat. When you are so kind, it breaks my heart to have you leave me; but oh! dear! they are turning the corner; go out of the back door. Good-by—good-by!"

Now there was no earthly reason why Amy should have been so frightened. Joshua Leonard had never uttered a word of objection to Arnold's visits. Indeed he was rather indignant, when, for a time, they became so rare; but some suspicion of the young man's good faith had seized upon him, and he became watchful where he had before trusted. In this lay all that Amy could have feared in her father. Still she flushed red, and trembled as her parents drove up to the door yard fence, rushed across the room to put the footstool in its place, and took great pains to move the splint-bottomed easy-chair some distance from the fire.

When her mother came in rosy from the frost, with a foot-stove in one hand, Amy busied herself at once in taking out the little square pan, from which she emptied a quantity of dead embers into the fire; then she helped untie her mother's hood and took off her cloak, from which she shook particles of snow with a lively zeal that charmed the good woman, it was in such cheerful contrast with the lassitude which had possessed her daughter so long.

When Joshua Leonard came in from putting away his horse, he found a pitcher of hot flip creaming over on the hearth, and a tray of doughnuts toasting by its side; while his daughter stood before the fire, flushed and heated, shading her cheek with one hand, and looking more beautiful than he had ever seen her in his whole life.

"Ah, this is snug and comfortable," he said, drawing the splint-bottomed chair on to the hearth, "trust our Amy for taking care of her father and mother. What, nobody been here? That's right, had a good time all by yourself, Amy?"

Amy did not seem to hear, but thrust the heavy tongs among the hickory logs, which sent a storm of sparks up the chimney, and a glow over the whole room.

"It must be very cold out-of-doors," she said, turning into the next room to hang up her mother's cloak.

"Yes," answered Joshua, setting down the pitcher which was now more than half empty. "Yes, darter, it is cold to the outer man, but we felt nothing of it in the meeting; for there the Lord was around and about us. Such a season of divine grace I have never witnessed—never in my whole life."

"Yes," said Mrs. Leonard, taking the subject from her husband's lips. "It was a refreshing time, Amy: such prayers, such gifts, and breaking out all at once, showed that the power of the Lord was over us. Six new converts ready to break out into hallelujahs—seven struck with conviction, and on the anxious seat together—and who do you think was among 'em, Amy? You couldn't guess in a week of Sundays, a crying like a child, and looking so broken down, shaking on the seat as if he couldn't believe that there was any hope for a backslider; and it's my opinion that there isn't, though your father thinks otherwise, which is his right, you know; but *such* a prayer as your father made after the new convert came, staggering right up to the throne of grace out of the depths of iniquity—such a prayer! It laid right hold of the horns of the altar, and made every heart around tremble. Oh! Amy, your father has a gift of prayer that makes me think about the angels that come under one's roof unawares. What if we had been waiting on one all our lives, thinking it was only a common man tending a saw-mill? Look at him sitting up so straight in your grandfather's chair. You wouldn't believe it was in him; neither should I, but if ever there was a babe of grace—there now, don't hold up both your hands, Joshua, as if it was to say that you ain't nothing particular, 'cause you are. Don't shake your head, 'cause I won't stop, because here it's my privilege. If women folks must keep silent in meeting, which I don't see the reason of—do you, Amy?—they ain't to be kept still in their own homes, by no manner of means; and if one has got a born angel all for her own property, why shouldn't she say so, and praise the Lord for it? I'd be glad if somebody would tell me. Don't talk in that way? Why not indeed? I'm sure if the Lord has blessed you with such gifts, I should be a great sinner not to own up to it, and blind as a bat not to see it. Well, well, I'll stop if you say

so; but as for the flip, if it wasn't for setting you an example, I wouldn't touch a drop, cold as it is. Creature comforts don't seem natural after a meeting like that, though it was thoughtful—as a child should be to such a father—for Amy to remember and have it ready. Now, Joshua, take off your boots, for the snow is melting on 'em; and give your feet a good toasting before the fire. Amy, bring the footstool for your par, and now—what was I talking about?—dear me!”

“About the person who came up to the anxious bench, mother? You haven't told me his name yet,” said Amy, gently, for she was too much accustomed to her mother's habit of conversation to get out of patience with it.

“No more I have, and you won't believe it when I tell you. Who would? Such a change! His beard all shaved smooth; his shirt bosom and collar clean as your father's. I declare it made me a'most burst out a crying just to see him, with his wild eyes and his thin hair, getting gray so fast. But your father's prayer helped him right on his feet; and when the brethren all said, ‘Amen’—they couldn't help it, you know—his face was lifted up to heaven, and it trembled all over, till at last he said, ‘Amen,’ too, but it was in a whisper, and great big tears came rolling down his cheeks like drops after the thunder breaks. I only wish Miss Arnold had been there!”

“Oh! mother, what does this mean? What can Miss Arnold have to do with this?” cried Amy, going close to her mother, and speaking with great eagerness.

“Miss Arnold! Oh! yes, I forgot to tell you it was her husband—Benedict's father—who came to the anxious bench. Didn't you understand that? I wish you could a seen our deacon when the poor backslider came in—I wish Benedict had been there, instead of running about with that French girl, which I'm sure he does.”

“No, mother, no. I am sure he does not care in the least for her, only as a visitor. I'll tell you something. The young gentleman is paying attention to Hannah Arnold, and that's what keeps them all at the farm so long.”

“How did you find that out?” demanded the mother, quickly.

“A little bird told me, mother,” replied Amy, with a playful look into her mother's face.

“Oh!” ejaculated the mother, shaking her head at the fire, and, casting a side glance at Leonard, who had fallen into thoughtfulness, and paid no attention to what was said; for, when his wife started off with a rush of language, he generally took refuge in reflection,

soothed by the soft patter of her words, as if they had been rain-drops on a roof. “Who told you that, Amy?”

“He did, mother.”

“Well, didn't I say so all the time? but you wouldn't believe me. No—no, just as if I couldn't see into a mill-stone just as far as anybody. Come now, par, supposing we rake up the fire and go to bed? I wonder if Miss Arnold knows what her husband has been about? I declare, Amy, if a backslider ever can get into the fold, your father has lifted that poor sheep half over the wall. Don't you think so, Joshua?”

“What were you saying, wife?” replied Leonard, taking up the great fire shovel.

“There now, did you ever!” cried the mother, appealing to Amy, with both her hands uplifted. “Why, par, I was talking about neighbor Arnold.”

“Yes, yes, God be with him!”

“And about your prayer.”

“Don't speak of that. Prayers should not be talked about.”

“And why not as well as sermons?”

“Because if good for anything, they rise to God, and ought to be left there.”

“See,” whispered the mother, leaning toward Amy. “Look in his face, and remember what I said about angels unawares.”

Amy did look in her father's face. Its rough features were in a glow of thankfulness: no lake ever took the sunshine more genially than that face reflected the pious ardor of his soul. Every look seemed to thank God that a human soul was on its way to salvation.

“Oh! father, is it possible? Will he have the strength to break off that terrible habit?” she said.

“Ask God to give him strength, my darter.”

“I—I?” murmured Amy, shrinking back with a look of affright, for she remembered how she had deceived her parents, and all the sinfulness of her conduct rushed upon her with a violence that made her faint.

Leonard was shoveling ashes over the fire, darkening the room; thus he did not remark her dismay, and she crept to her bed without a word, too happy for sorrow, and yet with a cloud upon her heart. Alas! this human love, how it stands between the soul and its God!

#### CHAPTER XIV.

ARNOLD was a self-sufficient egotist, and considered his own will, in every case, the higher law. He possessed intense pride, but of that

rude sort which is distinguished by an entire absence of sensitiveness or delicacy. Nay, I give his ruling passion the wrong term, it was arrogance, which takes its root in vanity, not that laudable pride which springs from self-esteem. This young man did not even desire to respect himself, his intellect was too sharp for that species of self-deception. It was enough for him that others recognized his pretensions, and yielded to the force of character, which rushed headlong on the right or wrong with equal impetuosity. But one little grain of pure love can, for a time, soften the hardest nature; and, in a character like this, many fine traits are sure to be found, rendering the evil that predominates still more dangerous.

That evening Arnold's better nature had been uppermost. He had put the young French girl and her unascertained wealth into the background; and Amy stole, like an angel of light, into his heart, calling forth every gentle feeling of which it was capable.

He had gone to the cabin with systematic caution, intending to conciliate the poor girl, and re-establish his influence over her entirely; for he began to dread the result if her sensitive nature were outraged beyond its strength. So far his plans, and even wishes, were all afloat. Men can be fastidious without one particle of true delicacy; and even a refined nature may, and will, sometimes, recoil from the love which is too evident in a woman. Had one doubt assailed Arnold of Laura's devotion to himself, he would have been restless and eager for a conquest so flattering to his vanity; but that warm and noble heart had betrayed itself too early for him to feel his triumph in all its zest. In fact, he had already made it a matter of calculation. How much power, how much wealth, how much of position could this love secure to him? These were the questions. He did not hesitate at the most cruel social treason that man is guilty of—but the reward, that must be certain and substantial.

It was difficult to obtain an account of the true position which Paul and his sister occupied. The letters of introduction, with which they were abundantly furnished, spoke of them generally as persons occupying an honorable place in society, of good family, and possessed of wealth. But the exact amount, and how much belonged exclusively to the sister, was the doubt which kept him in suspense. But there was plenty of time. The girl loved him, and Arnold was a man who knew how to wait.

But it was necessary to conciliate and control Amy Leonard. She had been urged too far.

If once satisfied of his indifference, she might appeal to her father for help, notwithstanding her solemn promise of secrecy. While in doubt of Laura's attachment, he had been imprudently reckless regarding Amy; but now that his restless vanity was appeased in that quarter, this must be remedied. With this object he had visited Amy again, but the man was not all evil, and the love which had been a part of his boyhood, rose through his selfish nature like incense in a prison; for the time he put all ambitious projects aside, it was both his policy and his pleasure to meet that affectionate nature half way. Besides there was something of mystery and daring in the affair, which seemed like an adventure.

As Arnold rode home, the sweet figure of Amy Leonard kept with him. Deep feeling had rendered her something more than the lovely child he had been weak enough to marry. That which was timidity once, had now mellowed down to deep and delicate tenderness. The gentle reticence of her character had a peculiar charm, when contrasted with the energy and almost reckless frankness of Laura's. He was drawing these contrasts, and thinking over the scene through which he had just passed on his way home.

The snow was thickly trampled along his way, and muffled the steps of his horse, so that the stillness made his reverie like a dream, and his horse took a wrong turn leading him toward Norwich. All at once he became conscious of a figure walking toward him in the darkness, and, checking his horse, he waited for it to come up; for he was not quite sure of his position.

"Hállo, friend!" he said, "can you tell me which way I am going, my head is completely turned? Do these lights come from Norwich?"

"Benedict, is it you?" answered a kindly voice, "and asking that question? What! lost in the old town, my boy?"

"What, father!" exclaimed the young man, drawing in his horse sharply, "coming home as usual?"

"No, not as usual, Benedict. I haven't been to the old place since that night. God forgive me that I ever went there—God forgive us all!"

"But you have been out every night—I have hardly had a chance to speak a word with you since."

"Don't speak of it again, Benedict, I can't bear it. God help me, I am trying to forget what you said, but such words burn into the brain; you might as well try to rub out a scar.

It is God's mercy they didn't draw me back again."

"Back where?"

"To the tavern—to the tavern!"

"And if you haven't been to the tavern, what takes you out so late at night, I should like to know?"

"I have been to meeting every night since then," answered the old man, meekly—"every night."

"To prayer-meeting!" cried the young man, drawing up his horse with a jerk which made him run backward. "To prayer-meeting!"

"Every night—every night. At first I crept in when they were all on their knees, and hid in corners; but some of the brothers saw me, and would make me come in among the rest, so I did; and to-night——"

"Well, what folly did you commit to-night, sir?"

"To-night I knelt down before them all, and asked my old neighbors to pray for me."

"You did!"

"Yes, it was all I could do; for the Evil One had been struggling with me all day. Up to the very meeting-house steps he followed me with that awful thirst. The tavern was in sight, with the bar room door open. Every breath I drew was parched; but I shut my eyes close, and staggered into the meeting-house, and down upon my knees. Some one was praying, and when the others joined in the 'Amen!' I held both hands on my mouth to stifle the cry for something to drink that rose up from my breast, choking back the Amen, as I have seen snakes strangle little innocent birds when they were attempting to fly."

The old man's voice was broken. You could feel that he shivered, and would have been struggling still, but for the exhaustion that had prostrated his strength. There was something so heart-broken and humble in his tones, that the hardest heart must have grown pitiful under them.

But Arnold had found in this painful confession a source of uneasiness far greater than lay in any degree of intemperance that his father could have reached. He knew well how near true brotherhood approaches to actual confession of sins and short-comings—better a thousand times drunkenness than this dangerous repentance!

"And so you have changed folly for treason, old man," he said, with a degree of sternness that was almost savage. "In one way or another you are determined to ruin or disgrace the family!"

"No, no! Not the family!"

"Well, your son then—your only son—I suppose, that these sanctified people will sweep out every thought of your life for them to pray over and denounce. They would consider it a duty to drag every foible or mistake of your family through the open church."

"No, no. I wouldn't do that. I will confess everything to God; but, as for the rest, Benedict, I would rather die and be lost forever and ever than see a hair of your head harmed. I would, boy, just as sure as I live, so don't be afraid."

"Afraid!" repeated Arnold, with a sneer. "Did you ever see anything like cowardice in your son, old man?"

"Dear, no! You were always brave as a lion. I've seen you strike at your mother when she wanted to put you in the cradle; we thought it very funny, when your little fist wasn't bigger than a walnut; but now it's terrible to see it clenched, as you did the other night!"

"And as I will again, old man, if that infernal subject ever comes up."

"It must, once more," said the old man, meekly.

"Never, sir, unless you wish me to forget that you are my father. I tell you it was the dream of a drunkard."

"No, Benedict, no! I did not drink then!"

"I tell you, sir, it was nothing else!" cried the young man, through his clenched teeth. "Do not attempt to torture such nightmare visions into facts. For your own sake—for my mother's sake, I warn you."

"Oh! Benedict, how I wish you could make me believe this; but I can't—I can't!"

"You had better, sir, or this new religious fit will end in mischief."

"No, Benedict, it will end in death, for it has been gnawing at my heart ever since."

"Drive it away then. I tell you it is all a lie."

"Oh! don't—don't, my son. It makes me tremble to hear you. Remember, though you and I are all alone, God hears us, and He knows all."

"Then He knows that you are crazy with drink, and have been for years."

The old man groaned heavily, and, drawing close to the horse, seemed about to press some other argument on his son; but Arnold backed his horse, wheeled him fiercely, and dashed away, leaving the heart-broken father standing in the snow. With his dull eyes, bloodshot with thirst rather than drink, following his wild flight

toward home, the old man fell on his knees in the beaten snow.

"Oh! my God! my God! what can I do?" he sobbed, lifting his clasped hands to heaven, in a passion of entreaty. "Look upon me, oh! Lord, for I am a miserable old man—broken down, helpless, trying to be good, and yet thirsting for my old sin. Help me! help me! or I shall go back, now, now; for where else is there a place for me on earth?"

He looked vaguely around, as if expecting some answer; but the far off beat of those retreating hoofs was all the sound he heard. He looked upward—a single star would have given him light, and perhaps hope, but the sky was drifted over with clouds, and all was dark.

He arose, wearily, and turned his face toward the town. How could he go home, with that fierce son ready to receive him with bitterness and reproach? How meet the wistful look of his wife, which had questioned him so often but never upbraided him? These things had not troubled him much when his brain was misty with drink; but, now that his thoughts were unnaturally keen, and his conscience awake, he had no courage to go home. Nay, such had been the effect of his son's sneer, that he began to shrink from the impulses of religion that had led him to the meeting that night. True enough he was only an old broken down drunkard—what business had he to hope anything from prayer? Had not the Almighty drawn a veil of clouds across the sky that he might know his day of grace had passed away forever?

He stood, hopelessly thinking over these painful fancies, with his hands loosely locked, and hanging down, like a child waiting to be led away. Then he lifted his face slowly, and looked toward the town. A single light shone from its terraces of snow—a reddish, evil-looking light that burned later than any other in Norwich. As a wild beast grows frantic at the sight of blood, the old man felt the influence of the fatal gleam. A fiercer thirst seized upon him. His brain began to burn with feverish desire; great drops of perspiration trembled on his forehead, notwithstanding a sharp wind turned them cold as they rose. Eager and famished—forgetting God and man—he turned upon the track that was leading him home. Keen desire gave him vigor: he walked heavily along the highway, muttering to himself like a lunatic that had escaped his keepers.

The light grew broader and more lurid; like the eye of a fiend, it blinked and blazed, and lured him on. The frozen breath melted on the

fever of his lips, and his chest heaved with wolfish appetite.

He had reached the slopes of the town. The tavern stood on one of the lower ridges of the hills, sheltered by an old willow tree. The rusty hinges of a sign creaked on one of the lower branches, and the naked boughs whispered drearily, welcoming the old man back with sighs.

A great fire blazed through the bar-room windows, and he already saw the shadows of his old friends moving against the glass.

"They will be glad to see me, at any rate," he said, rubbing his hands eagerly. "I wonder who will treat when they get me back from—from—oh! my God, from the meeting."

That instant a light hand was laid on his shoulder, and a low voice, full of kindness, made him turn. It was his wife—the home-angel, whom a pitying fervor had sent to bring the old man back.

They stood together, in the light which streamed from the bar-room windows. The riot of many voices came coarsely toward them. The sign shrieked overhead, as if it were a fiend to whom the presence of a creature so pure gave terrible pain. Her delicate face was bright with the frost, and softened with compassion. There was something of the old girlish look in her eyes—so earnest and full of love—something, too, in the dress; for she had wrapped herself in Hannah's scarlet cloak, and the hood looked richly warm around her forehead and against her cheek.

"Anna!" he said, tenderly, "Anna!"

"Yes, husband, I am here; don't think it strange, but this is your birthday, so I sat up waiting. Hagar would make some coffee against you come home; it was so hot and nice I got impatient, and came out to meet you; for Hagar don't like her good things to go to waste."

"Poor Anna! and so you came all this way?"

"Oh! it's nothing, Ben, you have walked farther than this after me, many a time; besides, climbing the hills after you got here."

"Ah! that was when we were courting, Anna, and the road seemed short."

"But the love which made it short hasn't changed, though we are getting old, Ben. Come, put your arm around me, as you did in those old times, and let's go home. It is cold here. Ah! now I am warmer. This is comfortable. See how clear the road shines since the clouds went off. It looked like snow when I came out; now the stars are bright as diamonds."

The old man lifted his eyes, and a thousand stars smiled down upon him brighter and more

pure, by far, than the red glare which had beckoned him through the tavern windows. His look fell slowly to the face of his wife. She had nestled close to his side, and, clinging to his arm, pointed down the path of snow, as it wound off homeward under the smiling heavens.

"That is our way," she said, softly. "You must find it now, for I am tired of looking down."

Her cloak fluttered open with the wind. He folded it, tenderly, around her, and held it in place with his arm. Her heart swelled. She remembered the old times, when that was the fashion in which they had always walked together, when alone under the stars.

After all, the power of good is stronger than that of evil; and oh! how much more beautiful! This gentle woman, who possessed scarcely more than the force of a child, had won her husband from a terrible temptation, with a few loving words, uttered with tact as well as tenderness. The thirst of a tyrant habit, and the anguish of a great trouble, were both forgotten under her sweet allurements.

"And do you know where I have been this evening?"

"No, I met Benedict; but he was riding fast, and did not see who it was, I think."

"Oh! you met him—our son?"

"Yes, husband, our first-born," she said, tenderly.

"How we used to love the child! You remember, Anna?"

"Used to love him! How we *do* love him! Who could help it? he is so brave and strong. I feel like a child by his side."

"And so you are, Anna."

"Like a child that has a little fear mixed with its love. Do you know, husband, I am always afraid of doing something that he does not like? And so is Hannah. I am sure of that; but then he is so perfect."

"Anna, would it kill you if he were not? If he had faults—if——"

"Ah! husband, we all have faults. What a terrible thing if we ceased to love one another because of that!"

"Yes, I know how good you are—how much you can forgive. You need not tell me so—I feel it here."

"Oh! I didn't mean that; but then it is so pleasant to be walking with you in this way, and chatting about the children. Of course Benedict has faults, but what of that? You and I mustn't see them, you know."

"Yes, it is possible to forgive faults, even

such as mine have been, because, perhaps, you think it a duty."

The little woman shook her head, and muttered,

"No, no! She had nothing to forgive. He had come home with her pleasantly, and that was enough of happiness for one night. Indeed, she loved him dearly, and always should, no matter what came or went."

But he clung to the first idea with a tenacity that surprised her. "Could she forgive a crime in one she loved—a great crime, for instance, such as murder, or—or—well, there was no worse crimes than that—could she forgive murder in her husband, or her son? Of course he meant nothing serious; but could she?"

"Yes, she could forgive even that, and—and——"

The husband drew a deep breath, but, noticing her hesitation he questioned her again.

"And what, Anna?"

"And die!" she answered, in a solemn whisper.

His face clouded again, and they walked on some moments without speaking. Then he broke away from the subject altogether, and told her where he had been that evening, and of his interview with Leonard at "the Falls."

He felt her arm steal around him, from under her cloak, as he went on, and when he looked down into her face the tears were falling over it like summer rain.

"I knew it would come before the end," she said. "From the glow at my heart, these few days back, I felt that it was near."

When he told her of his great temptation, and of the weakness which had followed it, she began to sob and murmur words of meek thankfulness that she had gone forth as the wish arose. It was like an interposition of heaven, she said, and the reward was that long, happy walk, so unlike anything they had known for years.

The husband sighed drearily. There was a heaviness at his heart which she must never know, or she would "forgive and die." He did not mention having met his son that night; and she, sweet soul, was quite unconscious that bitter strife lay between them.

They reached home, at length, and found Hagar sitting up in the kitchen, with two old-fashioned china cups and saucers set out on a round stand, where a snow-white cloth had been spread. She had been impatiently snuffing the candle, and making herself uncomfortable for more than an hour, and was ready to give her master and mistress a piece of her mind which



would mean something, when they came in. But when Mrs. Arnold appeared, muffled in her red cloak, from which she shook the frost with a smile, the house slave relented, and, instead of expressing her mind, according to promise, she helped Mr. Arnold off with his great coat, giving him an approving glance, as she hung it up; and, uncovering a dish in one corner of the fireplace, revealed the plump bosoms of a pair of quails that lay snugly nestled there. Then she took a coffee-pot, with a conical top, from the other corner, and began to pour the contents out, "good and strong," as she said, while the master and mistress sat down to enjoy a supper which the sharp air and a long walk had rendered doubly acceptable.

"Where is our son?" inquired Mrs. Arnold, as she drew her seat to the table, and began to carve the quails. "Go call him, Hagar. The girls are in bed long ago, but he must be up yet."

Hagar drew herself up, looking very like a black bantam when its mate is disputed, and observed, in her choicest language, that "Mr. Ben had turned up his nose at her invitation to wait till his parents came in, and went up stairs stamping with his boots like a trooper, without so much as saying, 'No, thank you,' a piece of business that she was sartin Dan would a made a touse about, if he hadn't been in the barn shelling corn, and consecently hadn't known nothing about it. She hadn't a doubt but young Mass' Arnold was a-bed and asleep, and she didn't want to disturb no gemman's depose, not she."

"Never mind, I will go myself, Hagar," said Mrs. Arnold. "Just bring another cup and saucer."

With these words she stole away up stairs, smiling back upon her husband—whom she considered doubly her property since the night's rescue—and hoping that Benedict would be in a condition to come down and share her happiness, not to speak of a little feminine triumph that broke up from the depths of her innocent heart, at the conquest which she had achieved over the Evil One.

She stole softly into her son's room. His candle was put out, but she could see by the starlight reflected over the snow, that he was in bed with his face turned to the wall. She bent over him, holding her breath; but when he did not move, she pressed a kiss, light as a roseleaf, on his forehead; tucked up the blue and white counterpane with a sigh of content, and went away; followed by his glittering eyes, for he had turned his head to look after her

with a touch of remorse. What if his father should confide in her? By what horrible mismanagement was the old man let into his secret? This was a source of continual anxiety which made him almost hate his father, and quite fear his mother, for he would have died rather than that good woman should know him as he was. When she left that kiss on his forehead, and tucked up his bed in the old-fashioned way, he felt the tears steal to his eyes, and murmured something which betrayed the tender regrets that her gentleness and loving faith awoke in his heart.

"Mother!" he said, calling her.

She came back and sat down on the side of the bed, glad to hear his voice. "Well, my son!"

"Did you wish to speak with me about anything?"

"Yes, Benedict, I wanted to tell you how happy I am, how good the Lord has been. Oh! my son, I shall never have the sorrow of seeing you condemn father again. He has come back to his old self, and this is his birthday."

"Mother!" said the young man, quickly, "did you ever know my father break a promise?"

"Break a promise! No, indeed. They could never kill his good principles so far as that."

"And you think he loves me?"

"Think he loves you! You, his only son—what a question! Better than his life, I'm sure."

"I suppose it's a wild sort of question, but I have had little knowledge of him these late years."

"No, he has not been quite himself, but that is all over now. He is a changed man—no, not a changed man, but his old self again; we shall live to be proud of him yet, Benedict. That is what I came up for. I want you to forget what you saw in that room when he was asleep there. I thought it was my duty to let you know everything then: but since, what I did has troubled me dreadfully. It was wrong to betray my husband's fault; my cheek grows hot when I think of it. I will beg his pardon before we go to sleep this night. If you hadn't been in bed, I'd a done it before you both; but somehow I cannot forgive myself."

Arnold had not been listening to this womanly speech: deeper and darker thoughts occupied him. At last he said very abruptly,

"Mother, send him up here before he goes to bed. My father, I mean."

"Yes, my son, but speak kindly to him—of course you will though."

"Yes, mother, I will—that is the best way,

you think, to control—to influence him, I mean?"

"Oh! yes, only be respectful and good-natured. Now I'll go down and pour out his coffee."

The mother hastened down stairs and settled herself by the little table; while her husband, with child-like delight, drained the strong coffee in his cup, and talked pleasantly with Hagar, who, woman like, gave out stray enticements for the praise which her fine cooking had so well deserved.

Thus with the craving appetite, and the weary soul both appeased, Mr. Arnold began to feel once more as the master of his own house. There was an atmosphere of respect about him which awoke all the dignity that had been so nearly dead in his nature.

When the little supper was over, and Hagar began to mutter about raking up the fire, Mrs. Arnold told her husband that Benedict was awake, and wanted to see him before he went to bed.

The old man turned pale at this and began to tremble, but he strode up stairs, heavily, and went into his son's room.

From that night Arnold ceased to sneer at, or revile his father; on the contrary, his demeanor became more than respectful, not servile, that to his nature was impossible, but he was, at all times, on the alert to help or defend his father: yet there was a sort of terror between them all the time. In this world, a secret which gives one man power over another, always brings with it the curse of alienation.

A week after this, Arnold and his guests were ready to go away. The visit had been both pleasant and eventful to the young people; but love, which is strong in most things, cannot control time or circumstance: so, with many a regretful sigh, the party broke up.

That night Arnold managed to see Amy alone. She was very sad, this unacknowledged wife: and the young man was himself greatly depressed. They had been talking earnestly, the loving eloquence was still in her eyes; and her lips quivered like those of a grieved infant.

"Oh! if you would only let me tell my father and mother I wouldn't care," she said, clinging to him, and, pleading with her innocent eyes so earnestly, that even he was moved to kiss away the tears that trembled in them.

"Be still, child. To no living soul shall you breathe a secret of mine. I must have obedience or nothing."

Amy drew a deep sob, and drooped into a submissive attitude. "Well," she said. "Well, it is my duty; you are my husband."

Arnold frowned and grew thoughtful.

"Are you offended with me, Benedict?" whispered the young wife, leaning her arm softly on his shoulder.

"No, Amy; but I feel unsafe, this promise is not enough; you mean to keep it, I know; but will you be strong enough?"

"I will—I will! Don't look so black."

He looked up suddenly. "You would keep an oath, I know."

She blanched white and began to tremble. "An oath, Benedict!"

"Yes; come here, put your two hands between mine. What on earth makes you so white? There, kneel down. Well, well, stand up, it makes no difference. Now swear before the God, who is our only witness, never to tell any living mortal that you and I are man and wife, till I give you permission."

"I—I——" she attempted to go on, but the words froze on her lips, and, holding out her arms imploringly, she fainted.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## THE BURNHAMS OF BOSCAWEN PLAIN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUSY L——'S DIARY."

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860, by Charles J. Peterson, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 297.

### CHAPTER XXXI.

*The 14th.*

"MISS BURNHAM."

"What, dear?"

She did not answer. She was on a low seat at my side, where she had been some time, thoughtfully stroking Donna's head.

"What is it, blessed girl?" I repeated.

"Is it wicked to wish that anybody was dead? when you can't help it? when you can't, any way, help wishing so, if you try ever so hard?"

"Why, dear? why do you ask?"

"Because I can't help wishing, sometimes, that Mrs. Blanstone was dead, I *hate* her so sometimes!"

"Why, Rose, dear!"

"I do! She asks me such bad questions! and when I keep saying I don't know, she says 'don't?' or 'that's strange!' or some such thing, and it makes me feel so angry, the way she says it! She and Mrs. Hapgood were talking about me at the dinner-table, to-day; I knew they were, for I watched them after I saw one particular look of Mrs. Blanstone, and they kept looking out to where I was; with bad looks too, as if they thought I was bad; and, after dinner, Mrs. Hapgood came along, a little at a time, till she was where I was; and then *she* began to ask me questions, to say 'em,' 'indeed?' and 'ah?' At last I wouldn't speak to her, and then she went off with her back toward me, looking just as haughty as she could, and I grew so angry! I'm sorry, darling Miss Burnham. I know how it will be, after this; I shall be angry every day, perhaps! I shall be afraid all the time, that they are talking about me, and shall keep watching them and be so angry!"

How the tender form writhed with the inward pain! How pale was the young, sweet face! how mournful were the tones!

"Never mind, dear," said I, at length, my heart throwing off its pain. "They are only *two women*; that is all. And the women in this world, where there is so much to hinder one's doing right; and the men too, dear, are so full of weakness and error, at the best, so liable any

time to do, or say, or look the things that are wrong, when they themselves would be the gladdest of anybody, if they could always do, say, and look the things that are right, that we mustn't let our comfort hang on them. They are weak creatures, at the best. We are weak. We are all weak, erring wanderers, at the best. Christ died for us all, we are all such sinners. He is the eternal Shepherd of us all, we are all such wanderers!"

"Don't you wish we weren't such wanderers, darling Miss Burnham? that we were all good? I'll tell you!" she added, her face faintly brightening, "don't you wish you and I and poor little Donna, that never, never, never asks anybody any bad questions, could go away somewhere to some beautiful place, where anybody else wouldn't come? Or, if we are here, don't you wish those women weren't here where we are?"

"I don't know as I do, dear. I wish everybody was filled with happy, kind, large thoughts toward each other, and toward all life; but if unpleasant things are said to one and another, they may as well be said to us, as to another. We can bear them as well as another. There is no reason why our part of the sea of life should always be calm, and we have nothing to disturb our voyage, when for others there are so many storms and fears. No, dear; we are going home; to our beautiful, heavenly home, upon this sea; and we will bear what comes. We will not do a wrong, a wicked thing in our hearts, be cross, angry, and suspicious, because others, who haven't so much to think about, so many things to make them content and good-natured as we have, are foolish, ill-bred, and filled with all manner of weak curiosity. We, at least, as far as we are able, will be what God requires all his earthly children to be, loving and kind. We will be kind even to the disagreeable people. We will let them be just where they are, ever so near us; and perhaps we will do them good, put some good thoughts into them. Wouldn't this be a blessed thing, my blessed girl, to do them good?"

"Why, yes, if she only knew how, blessed Miss Burnham," warbled the voice. "How could she? If they came to her again and asked her questions, what should she say?"

"She should just look them gently in the face and tell them the honest truth—that she didn't know," I answered, "and not be in the least offended; not in the least. If she was in the least offended, she did wrong; if she watched them, or thought about what they would say, she did wrong; for, what they said was nothing to her; that was between them and their God; but what she herself did, and felt, and said, was something to her; was between herself and God; and God, the dear, good, loving Father, the Holy Being, would see and know it all. So she must keep a good, loving heart toward God, toward everybody."

"Let me go to Mrs. Hapgood's door and tell her I want to kiss her and say good night to her!" said she, her face beaming, her eyes filled with tears. "May I? I want to. I should feel better here!" spreading her hand on her heart.

"Yes," I said, "go, dear. Ask her if she will take a walk with us in the morning, if it is as pleasant as it was this morning."

When she came back she said, "I like Mrs. Hapgood! she's good! likely as not a great many of the folks are, that we don't like; likely as not!"

"Likely as not," I answered. "Nobody but God can know."

"No; nobody but God," she replied. "I said, 'I want to kiss you, Mrs. Hapgood. I was cross out in the verandah; I'm sorry. I want to kiss you.' And, in a minute, when I said this, she had the kindest face! Then I said, 'I don't know anything about my father, you see, Mrs. Hapgood. I don't know as I ever had any; but I suppose I did have, once.' Then she smiled and led me into her room farther, and called me a good little girl! a little woman! and filled my pocket—see! with lozenges, and laughed because her big, right hand wouldn't go into my pockets—'cunning' pockets, she called them. And she says she will walk with us and be glad to. She sent love and her good night to you. I'm glad I went! She said she wished I'd come and see her every day. Oh! and, Miss Burnham, if I had done as Mrs. Hammond told me to!"

"What did she tell you to do?"

"Why, when I told her about their asking me questions, she said it was none of their business! and I had better tell them so! What if I had? and I should, if you hadn't happened to be here to tell me different! I love you so, darling, for telling me different! Now I shall remember it,

and know what to do if people keep asking me. But I hope they won't! do you suppose they will?"

I do suppose they will, unless the nature of her parentage is truthfully avowed, so that all in the house, all in whatever house or neighborhood she may at any time be, may know everything, and so have a chance to settle down upon it. She must be told the whole truth, in such a way that she shall feel it no shame upon herself. She must be told that her parents sinned, terribly; but that they are not the only ones who sin terribly; that we are all such sinners in God's sight, such wanderers from Him, such worshipers of this poor place, the earth, instead of Him, that no one has any right to despise her mother, much less her, an innocent, precious little girl. Others must see how erect and peacefully she stands and moves in her innocence, her truthfulness, and must love her the more for her early sorrow, so that the sorrow shall be turned by love into peace. I see it all. I know as well what to do, as if an angel from heaven had told me. Oh! but, I ask myself, is it not sadder than the grave, that such necessity exists for such action?

## CHAPTER XXXII.

*The 16th.*

It is all over. He is no more mine. I am no more his. He goes his way, I go mine. We shall both suffer much; this is certain for every soul born upon the earth; we shall both get much refreshment as we go, I hope, since refreshment comes, even in the hardest strait, to the soul that loves, is patient, and does right.

He says, "It is as much as he can stand;" I say it is as much as I can bear. My tears stream, I am so lonely! I pity him so! I sink and pray; turn my eyes upward, strive to lift my soul upward, to lay it at Christ's feet. I shall have help soon, that I know. I never yet have prayed and striven in darkness, that light did not at length come beaming. This time it will come with no high noon-day radiance. I am sure of this. Such light lies no more on my path this side of the gate of heaven.

*Evening.*

My father has written to me that he is sorry, of course, that things have taken such an unlooked-for turn, but he can't say that he blames me; my mother, he adds, says she cannot. They both see from my letter that I am doing as I think I ought. They both hope it will turn out right. But they don't expect me to stay away from my home; they have missed me, they miss me now. They both think I had better bring

the girl and place her at Miss Haley's boarding-school, Concord, where I can go every week, oftener if I want to, to see her. They think, and my uncle Julius does the same, that Miss Haley is, no doubt, the one to respect and love the child just as much as if she were of legitimate birth; is the one to lead her young ladies and others to respect and love her as much. Having hit upon this plan, which they believe I will fall in with, they feel more at ease, all of them.

Rosenvelt, they write, would start for the South in a day or two, as no doubt he had told me in his reply to mine. Would I not be well enough to come soon? At any rate, come when I would, I was their good, dutiful child, and always had been. So no more, at that time, except that they were my affectionate and waiting parents. Then followed both names; and there were tear-drops, let fall by my beloved mother when she wrote her name. I have answered them at once, and told them both how dear they are to me; how their kindness has brightened my difficult way; have written to Rosenvelt, begging him to stay, that I may see him when I come. I have shown him that there is no reason why he should go, as I shall leave Rose at Concord.

*Later.*

Mrs. Harrington was sitting with me in my room, this evening, and, after a little pause in the conversation, she said, "I have my doubts about Mrs. Mayfield. I think they will be obliged to take her to Worcester."

I looked up inquiringly, and she went on, "I think the symptoms grow upon her."

"Symptoms of what?" asked I.

"Symptoms of insanity; don't you know? haven't you heard? that is queer! why, they're afraid of insanity, her health is so poor, she has had this low fever and melancholy so long, and it has such effect on her brain and whole nervous system! They were in hopes the water treatment would cure her. But she lost her baby, all the child she had, in June, and it seems likely to kill her—or worse. She didn't *show* the symptoms much, when she came here. She was only pale—of a lead-like paleness—and so melancholy! She has never been at the table, although she is well enough for this, so far as her bodily strength is concerned; bodily strength, I say, as if the legion of white cords, called nerves, weren't as much a part of the body as the bones are and the muscles! Her nerves are so weak she can't come; she herself told me so one day, when I urged her. This is the reason she never mixes with the

other patients. Mrs. Blanstone thought it was because she was so 'aristocratic,' you know, and admired it beyond measure. Strange you haven't heard about this before! strange we haven't before happened to speak of it together! Her husband has gone to Oregon; this is the worst of it; went in June, just before the little one died."

"Her husband?" said I, not daring to look up and show her my face—not daring to let her hear my voice in one more word.

"Yes; he had some appointment there, or something. The time will soon be out for him to come. Then perhaps she will be better. I hope she will; she is a sweet woman and it seems so sad."

"They live in Philadelphia?"

"Yes. Mr. Mayfield has his home with them, I believe. How do you like him?"

"I don't know."

"Don't?" with the up and down inflexion. "That's curious. When will you know, I wonder?"

"I don't know, I am sure."

"Oh! ho! if that isn't funny!"

*Morning.*

Just then, word came to us that Professor Hall, one of the patients, was showing some beautiful drawings below, and we went down to see them. They were his own, and were very beautiful; were of castle and glen, of mountain, ruin, lake, and stream and fall, and there they all were before his eyes, mementoes of the pleasant places he will see no more forever, for his health and strength are gone. He lived it all over again and said, "Here it was so and so"—"Here, within this dark ruin, it was so and so. I shall never forget *that* day while I remember anything." "Yes, that little girl was actually there, carrying her bundle of sticks. Children begin early there to carry their burdens. But they sing, carrying them. This little girl sang; only it was a sad song; I can hear it this moment."

I am ashamed and humbled thinking of what happened while we were there looking at the poor man's drawings. I despise myself for it, and see how easily sin besets one; how easily, if one does not watch and guard oneself, one may any moment become oneself a castaway, in those very graces and charities one has preached to others. I said I longed to be able to draw like that; he answered, "I will teach you; you will easily learn." If we had been in Tuscany, beside that little child with the bundle of sticks, I should probably have poured out my thanks and glad assent. As we were here in New Eng-

land, where even the chairs are not allowed to be out of their rows, where, as yet, we are a law unto ourselves less frequently than our neighbors are our law, I answered him with snowy formality, thinking within myself that I must first learn something of his antecedents, who he is, what he is, whether he is professor of some grand branch of science or letters, at some grand college, or is some poor, out-of-the-way creature, who, some way, somewhere, has been covered with a pretentious empty title. I must first learn how he stands with Mr. Mayfield, with the ex-Senator; whether they let him come to their side as their peer. But I despised myself in two minutes for that miserable thought of pride and subserviency. My heart ached when I saw him with his back turned, carrying away his drawings. That he is poor, I have no doubt; for his clothes, although worn with neatness, are seedy and old-fashioned compared with those worn by the rest of the gentlemen here. This should make me the kinder to him, that is all. For the rest, it is all between his own soul and God, not between him and me. There is nothing in him that can harm me; there may be something in me that can do him good, give him comfort. There are many, this I believe, both among men and women, especially among young men and young women, who cannot stand securely unless the influences of good people, or, at least, of people with fair morals, are about them to uphold them. These must be careful where, at whose side, they stand, lest they go downward, lest they imbibe deterioration to their morals, or their manners, lest their spirits do not only fail in getting good, but do get positive evil. They are not yet ready to be leaders, consolers, teachers; and until they are, it is necessary for them to be led, taught, consoled. But for me, of one thing I am sure—no creature on this earth can harm me if I am loyal in my own keeping. No man, or woman, or child is so little respectable, so corrupt, wretched, insane, so ragged and filthy, that, looking into her or his eyes, I do not, as it were, look into his or her soul and see God there calmly presiding over it. Even so wretched, and despised, and down-trodden of men, there is God in his holiness and strength, keeping watch over the undying soul of his child. I say to that man—"You are not my Lazarus, on whom my tears of loss shall fall, or my John, who shall lean on my shoulder sitting at meat; but you are my brother; stay here by me and be helped and comforted." To the woman I say—"You are not my Mary, to sit at my feet, or my Martha to serve me; but you are my sister, let me help and comfort you.

Poor creature! the world has been hard on you; stay here by me and be comforted." Neither have I fear of animals. So, to me, this is no beautiful figure merely—"And the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and a little child shall lead them," but a blessed, blessed prophecy. I shall not see it, but others will; and, in a way, it has already become fulfilled to me, because I believe. And so I have, thank God! no earthly fear, simply because I believe and understand. I know what dear Mary Lyon felt when she said to her assembled young ladies, "There is not in all the universe one thing that I fear, except that I shall not know my duty, or shall fail to do it."

*Morning.*

Mr. Mayfield joined Mrs. Harrington and me last evening, while we were looking at Professor Hall's drawings. We talked of drawing as an accomplishment, an attainment, so common among English ladies, so rare among us; Mrs. Harrington was scolding about its rarity among us, in her way that was, as usual, half-reasonable, half-unreasonable; and so it happened that we three were left standing alone, after all the rest had gone to their chambers.

"Mr. Mayfield!" said Mrs. Harrington, breaking in abruptly upon a little lull.

He looked at her inquiringly, waiting for what she would say.

"You saw Miss Burnham before ever I did. Have you any idea how long it takes her to find out what she thinks of a person?"

He smiled. "No, I am sure," he answered.

"Well, I haven't. I have been asking her this evening how she likes you, and she says she is sure she don't know *how* she likes you."

Then did he not laugh? I laughed; but I blushed and was ashamed. I would gladly have hidden my head, until, glancing his way, I saw so serene and manly a face, so kind and appreciative a face, that my trouble went, and I laughed nearly as heartily as they at what went back and forth between them. When we were parting, Mrs. Harrington said to him, "I shall inquire of her now and then; and when she herself knows, you shall hear. I will tell you."

He laughingly thanked her; then, with his face settling at once into his habitual mild seriousness, he gave each his hand, bade each, "Good night," and we parted.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

*October 20th.*

"She takes to you amazingly. You don't know anything about her?—I mean about who her father was, and what he was?"

"Yes, I know all about it."

"You do? well, I declare! I didn't know as there was anybody in the world who knew, now the child's mother is gone. Do tell me who he was; or is, if he is living?"

"No, this I can't tell you. I have no right to; and it wouldn't alter the case at all, if I could. She is illegitimate; this——"

"Is? is? illegitimate? How you talk! but I thought so all along; I thought it must be; I couldn't see how else to account for her not knowing anything about her father, or even that she had one. Illegitimate?"

"Yes, Mrs. Blanstone, illegitimate. This is all. This is enough for the father; it was enough for the poor mother; the sorrow of it destroyed her probably; but to the innocent child it is, or should be, nothing; no shame within herself, no disgrace with others. She is just as pure, just as sweet. She is just as precious in God's sight, and in the sight of His holy angels. She is a great deal dearer to me. I love her ten times more than if she had not this misfortune to be, in a degree, a sorrow to her all the days of her life." My eyes were on her; she was walking thoughtfully at a distance, with Donna.

"Yes, that is true," said Mrs. Blanstone, her eyes also on Rose. "That is true. She has, no doubt, got to suffer a great deal. Does she know?"

"No; but I shall soon tell her."

"And others? shall you tell others? Nobody, or nobody here, at least, seems to know it now, though I guess they all have their thoughts; a good many have asked me what I thought. I told 'em I *thought* everything wasn't right as it ought to be; but I didn't know."

"Well, now you know. You can tell others; but I hope you all will be careful how you carry yourselves toward the child; you will be, I am sure, if you are Christians. I should know by any one's treatment of a little child, under such circumstances, whether she had in her the humble, loving spirit of Christ, or the arrogant, self-righteous spirit of the Pharisee."

"I suppose so; I suppose she is no worse for what her parents did."

"You know she isn't, Mrs. Blanstone. Is there anything you know with greater certainty than you know this?"

"Well, I suppose there isn't. But we've always been used to consider the child a disgraced thing, you know. At least, I've been brought up to consider it so; and it ain't easy to get rid of such impressions."

"Alas! no, it is hard. From our childhood

we are getting impressions that Christ would never have given us, if we could all the while have been at His knee. This is one of them—that the woman, ever so hard toward others, ever so full of wrong toward the poor, of malice and evil-speaking toward the rich, ever so much lifted up in her own conceit, if she does not commit adultery, is, or may be, a good, respectable sort of woman; and this is another—that a woman may be gentle, loving-hearted, trustful toward everybody, amiable and just toward everybody; but, if through her love, and trust, and weakness, her lack of aid divine and human, she commit adultery, then what is she?"

"What do you think she is?" she asked.

"I think she is lost."

"You do? I thought——"

"Lost until Christ finds her; or until she, poor creature! finds Him, lays herself at His feet, begs and pleads for mercy, for the fountain that cleanseth. Then, if He listens to her—and He certainly does, if she begs sincerely, humbly—she is saved; but we don't know it. In our sight she is still unclean, although she loves so much for the much forgiven, is so lowly in heart, as to be to God one of His best beloved children. We, lost still, lost as deeply in God and Christ's sight as she ever was, lost in our pride, our self-righteousness, the sin they abhor most of all, pass her by, lift our heads very high, as we pass her, and hold our skirts very close. Don't you know, Mrs. Blanstone, can't you think from what Christ said when He was on earth, what He would say now to her and to us?"

"I suppose He would——"

"Yes; to her He would say, 'Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more'—the blessed, blessed teacher! To us, if He saw us go by with our heads lifted, and our skirts held in, He would say, 'Woe unto you, Pharisee!' and we would deserve it, until, finding out that we, too, were lost in our different sin, our pride, we would come and sue for mercy, for the fountain that cleanseth, as humbly as she would. Rose, darling." Rose had come, and, in her way, dipped her little fingers into mine, leaning against me.

"Darling Miss Burnham! I wish everybody was as good as you. But they aren't, and I'm sick!" She sunk down at my side, and clung to me, shuddering.

"We know of one good little girl, at any rate, don't we, Miss Burnham?" said Mrs. Blanstone, with a smile on Rose that made the child's face a little brighter.

"If you mean me, ma'am, I thank you; for I was afraid, when I came, that you didn't like

me. I was afraid darling Miss Burnham would get so that she wouldn't like me; and if she were to, I should die!" she sank lower, clinging closer to me. "Mrs. Stone asked me those same questions, Miss Burnham, before I went out there," said she, at length. "I went out there because I *couldn't* bear it! and then I saw you, and, after awhile, I felt as though I should die, you looked so sober, darling!"

I was about to reply, when Mrs. Blanstone superceded me with, "If you had known what Miss Burnham was saying, you wouldn't have felt as though you would die, would she, Miss Burnham? She said that she loved you ten times more than if you had a father and mother, as other, or, most other children have. We both said you were a nice little girl. We praised you ever so much!"—winking to me as a sign that I must let her talk on, if there wasn't much truth in it. "We praised you—you've no idea how many nice things we said about you." She gave me another vulgar wink, a vulgar tuck with her elbow. Rose saw it, and again sank down, this time sobbing. "I guess I'll go," said Mrs. Blanstone, rising. "She'll get over it sooner, perhaps, if she's all alone with you. Don't be unhappy, Rose; don't get in a habit of being unhappy in this world, for some people grow very, *very* unhappy so. I'll put something into your room; I'm going into the house now; you'll see what it is when you come; 'tis something that you love. You'll see." She was gone, and in a moment the sobbing lulled away. I raised her a little, and she came into my arms and lay on my bosom. I asked her, after she became calm, if she could bear to have me tell her all about her father, all but his name; if she would be happier knowing; knowing what to tell people, even if there was one thing in it to give her pain. "Oh! yes, if I would only tell her! Would I? Would I tell her now? She wanted to hear so! She thought about it so much, in the night, and when she was eating, and all the time!" She settled down close to me, my hand hugged close in both hers to her heart. She did not move—save once, and that was a movement of joy, when I told her it was Mr. Horace—to the end of the long, sad story. I gave it what brightness I could. I told her such connections were not uncommon, so that by large numbers they are hardly felt to be sinful; told her how noble her mother proved herself in feeling it, where so few feel it; in abandoning it, where so few abandon it, while they are yet favorites, well-treated, and really beloved, as her mother was by her father. I showed her all her father's generous qualities,

his regrets and pain; bade her think what comfort there was in knowing that, but for this one error of her parents, they would have been so excellent! bade her not forget, that, with it, they were better than very large numbers whom no one blames, whom the law has pronounced man and wife. When I paused, she showed what points she did not understand, by asking me questions, such questions as a woman would ask, not such as one would hear from most girls of ten. For, alas! of late, she goes eagerly on, on! not as most children go, stopping for bird, butterfly, and every wayside flower and berry, so that they go slowly, idly, with lulled minds; but going forward, wondering, questioning about life, fearing it, dreading the face it will show, yet straining to see. Now that she knows all, and can see exactly where she stands, where others stand, I hope she will settle down in peace. I will take her to Miss Haley's school, and will, myself, be with her there a great deal. In the vacations, at any time when I see that she needs the refreshment of it, we will journey together; will come back to this place where so peaceful a spirit hovers; will go to the blessed little gray church behind the trees and columns, where I will again sit, and think what heaven must be, if here and there on the earth one finds such places of rest and joy. *He* will be far away. But I shall love to go where his feet have been, to look upon the place where his eyes have rested. My soul, will, in a degree, be sad, for I shall want him; although I believe it will, in a greater degree, be joyous, since, in a way, he is mine, if his flesh is ever so far; since this life is so soon over, and the life in which we will all meet and mingle under such blessed relations with each other and with God, is, at the farthest, so near. When—

*Later.*

Mrs. Warrington came to ask if I was ready to go down and take a lesson of the professor. He was all ready to attend to us.

Mr. Mayfield was there with his book, his fingers in to keep the place. I was a great deal too glad to see him; a great deal gladder than I have any real reason to be. It was far too good and pleasant to me having him there where I was, in the same room, living the same life, speaking to me, listening with such delicate attention to me. Heigho! I do not know how it will end; all I know is, that I cannot help loving to be where he is; cannot help living the hour over and over again; cannot help being happy. I wish I could; for in the midst of his mildness toward me, is something very grave and reserved, showing itself now and then; I



can just discern it now and then, and it bids me be sober in all I feel and do.

It was our first lesson to-day. I had drawn before, bending over my desk at school, my table at home, copying engravings. Mrs. Harrington knew nothing about it; she had never had patience, she said. She made heavy strokes to-day; she liked them, she said; and besides, she could make no others; it wasn't in her. She went on with rapidity; in making a tree and a gate, she made it as she said it ought to be, not as it was before her; she wished, she said, that she could have hold of the real trees, the whole real landscape, she would make something of them. But since she couldn't alter them, she wasn't that better?—only—only—comparing it with mine—"it appeared to her that hers was rather botchy, somehow. Look, Mr. Mayfield! What made hers so botchy, Professor Hall?"

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

*October 21st.*

I HAVE met Mrs. Mayfield. We rode this morning—Mr. and Mrs. Mayfield, Mrs. Harrington, Rose, and myself. Rose was between Mr. Mayfield and Mrs. Harrington, on the front seat. Mrs. Mayfield and I were together on the back seat. Rose chirruped; Mr. Mayfield let her hold the reins. Mrs. Harrington had the horses stopped every now and then for her to get out and gather the bright autumn leaves appearing here and there; Mrs. Mayfield and I talked—she with averted eyes—almost all the time. How plaintive were the sweet voice and the look in speaking! The look was restless, and a little frightened at first; but it soon grew calm, although the sadness remained the same. She talked mostly of what she used to do, and feel. "I used to do just so," she said, abstractedly, watching Mrs. Harrington's quest of leaves in the edge of a wood beside the road. Another time she said, "I used to be always planning, looking forward. My mountain seemed to me to be very strong." Once when she said something of this life being full of trials, I said, "And not one is there that is not needed somewhere, by some one. God sees them all, knows where they all fall and why. He is 'too wise to err, too good to be unkind.' We may always know this, come what will."

"This is my trouble," she said, "that I can't believe. If I could believe that God saw and knew what was done the night my baby died, the day it was laid away out of my sight in the grave, if I believed He saw it, knew that it was for the best, I could never complain. It is because I don't see His hand; or if I see it dimly,

I see no face of benignity above it, but a frowning face. If I believe for a moment that He did it, I think that He did it in His anger, and this is so dreadful, I try to think that my child died of croup and He had no part in it. Isn't this dreadful to feel so?"

"It is sad because the doubt troubles you; but it does not alter the truth. There is the truth beaming all the same. God is there just the same. He has your child in His own safe arms, all the same; is all the same your wise, kind, heavenly Father, as if you saw it and believed it, and so got the blessing of it. You are ill now; this is the trouble. If you can be well again so as to see things as you ought, then you will know."

"Do you believe I ever shall know? shall ever see God's hand, as it were, and feel as you do? Perhaps you wouldn't feel so, if you had lost a little baby, if you were ill, if your husband were afar off and all so dark."

"No, indeed, dear Mrs. Mayfield, if all was with me as it is with you, if all the circumstances of loss, health, and spiritual condition, were the same, I would feel as you do. But they never can be the same. I know too well what God is, He has shown Himself too clearly to me in my late sickness, and in other times of darkness, for me ever to doubt again, let what will come. I have seen what eternity is, that it is a long, blessed time with God, where death can never come, or sin to defile and grieve us; that this life is but as a day, as it were, so soon over, that its largest griefs are but atoms, if we see them as we ought, in the light of God's everlasting love. You will see this some day. I am sure you will. Some time God will be so dear to you that you will bless whatever He does—His life and His death, His sickness and His healing, since it is all His work, is all for your eternal good."

"Oh! if I could!" she said, her eyes uplifted. "And it appears to me I shall! Oh! if I ever can feel that God took my baby because He loved him and loved me! that His eye of love, not of anger, is on me; that He is only keeping my lamb till I come! Oh! God, have mercy and help me to believe!"

"And remember, dear," said I, "that the truth is all the same, if you do not see it. It is there waiting for you to see."

"If it is there, I ought not to complain. But I ought to mourn for my unbelief, my ingratitude."

"Yes," I told her, "that was what she was to mourn for, not that God had seen fit to take her child."

God forgive her, she said, how she had sinned against Him! "Arthur," she added, speaking forward to Mr. Mayfield. He turned to listen, and she said, "I believe the day is going to dawn; it seems to me that it is! And if it does, if I do get where I can see things clearly, there will nowhere on this earth, in any poor creature's heart, be such joy and gratitude as in mine!—for," she added, turning now to speak to me, "I have had so much done for me, so much kindness shown me to help me to bear it; and many a poor creature loves her baby, and has nothing, nobody left to comfort her! I see what I want, I want God. I have never found Him; never sought Him, in fact. I have lived altogether in the world. Now He punishes me."

"In other words, dear, (meaning the same thing if we understand what He does aright,) now He draws you to Himself by your suffering, that you may know how much greater, better, more satisfying He is to the human soul, than all this earth can be. He never meant that the earth should satisfy us. The earth is beautiful, good, a beloved place to us, if we have first of all sought God and found Him, so that the light and joy of His presence is upon all and in our hearts. This was what Christ meant when He said, 'Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you.' Without this kingdom, we may have husband, child, lands, houses, gardens, fame, but they are not really added to our soul's stock of joy, unless God shine on them and on us, and in this light, this beaming spirit, we see them as they are, hold them for just what they are and no more. Then they are ours; but God is so much greater than they, that, if He takes them, if we feel as we ought, we can say out of our calm, submissive souls, 'None of these things move me, for I still have God.'"

She wept, with the tears dropping gently, one after another, shining as they fell. She said no more, but her eyes had a new expression in them; had no longer the look of restlessness, of half-affright, of dumb misery, but of meek, sad submission. I prayed for her; I do now, with the longings for her that go silently upward and lie at God's feet. She held my hand when we parted, and lifted her face to kiss me, without speaking. She seemed as if she had not strength to speak.

Later, before we left the dinner-table, I heard her talking with the doctor. She said, "I have given you a great deal of trouble, doctor. I haven't done as I ought in my diet or in anything. Now I will do precisely what you require of me. I long to be well!"

We were below all last evening; or, that is, Mrs. Harrington, Mr. Hepburn, Rose, myself, and many others, were below until ten o'clock; we had conversation, music upon the piano and Professor Hall's guitar, and some very sweet, natural singing by two young ladies, sisters; one of them invalid, the other nurse. But Mr. Mayfield did not join us. I saw him passing the windows outside in the piazza; saw him passing the door in the hall; but he did not come in. We met him on the landing when we came up; that is, Mrs. Harrington, her uncle, Rose and I met him. He stopped to say good night to us, but he was pale and grave.

"Mr. Mayfield was graver than a judge; ever so much graver; a judge is nothing to him," said Mrs. Harrington, coming into my room. "I think he likes *you*; I think this bothers him. You're so immensely quiet where he is! you don't look at him, or feel him; you are always full of somebody else; it's my uncle, or it's the doctor, or it's the professor, or it's that tub of flesh, Mrs. Blanstone, or it's Mrs. Stone, or it's this good little chit," nipping Rose's upturned chin, "now there's another, Mr. Mayfield; you care nothing about him; you care for all these; but you've no gracious looks and words for him. I'm provoked very often. Aren't you, little chit?" again looking down on Rose's upturned face, again pinching it.

"No," said Rose, "I ain't provoked. I'm happy. I think Miss Burnham does just right, I think you do just right, I think everybody does just right, everybody is so good to me."

"Oh! that's it! Good night, chit; good night, dear. Forgive me if I do scold sometimes. I mean it for your good as all the scolders do when they scold. I hope you will have eyes, ears, and tongue for him who deserves it of you most of all, to-morrow. I shall watch you; and if you haven't, if I see that you haven't, I shall come pouncing upon you in the midst of it. Wouldn't you, sissy? Good night."

Having looked in my face to see if Mrs. Harrington's complaint and threat troubled me, having seen that they did not, Rose said with a happy-looking face, "Now I'll go to bed, darling Miss Burnham, after I've given you one good, long good night kiss." She met Mrs. Hammond in the door, coming to bring her.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

The 25th.

I SAT reading, an hour ago; Rose sat near me with the last "Little Pilgrim" in her hand; but

not reading; for, among her resemblances to Roosevelt, this is one, holding a book that she takes a fancy to—from something she hears said about it, or from some picture—in her hand, carrying it about with her, but not reading. I saw that she was not reading; that she was watching for a chance to speak to me, so I looked away from my book to her and smiled. Then her face kindled. Then she said, "I was wanting to tell you, Miss Burnham dear, how glad I am we told people the truth! Now they all know; now I know; I love them all so! and they love me! It makes me so glad!" Then I gave her the little lesson I had seen before that she needed—that we must love truth for truth's own sake; not for the sake of the love or the gladness it brings. Another little lesson I gave her—and this also I have seen before that she needed—that we must not let our hearts find too much gladness in the love and fondness of others. They are but mortal, I taught her; any day we may lose them in one way or another—there are many ways, many causes to part us from the love and fondness that are human—and so we must not build our comfort too much on them. When people loved us, were kind to us, I said, they did no more than they ought; it was what we all ought to do, to love one another, to be polite and kind one toward another; when we had shown others love and kindness, we had done our simple duty, that was all; when others had shown us love and kindness, we had met our simple right, that was all. There it all rested. We must not think too much of what we had given or of what we had received. We should just be kind and polite still, and bless God for all. We cannot love God too much, trust Him too far; but men and women we can easily think too much of, set our hearts on too far. Did she understand? I asked. Bless her! did she know what I meant?

She guessed she did. Let her tell me. She guessed I meant so and so, so and so; didn't I?

"Yes, blessed girl—darling—how well she understood, for such a little girl!"

We are going over into the town, this morning—Mrs. Harrington, her uncle, Rose, and I.

To-morrow will be the Sabbath day. Mr. Mayfield is to preach in the morning. Mr. Clayton has been over to press it. I shall go and hear him; and it may be the last time; for he will soon go.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

October 27th.

SATURDAY I did not see him at all, to be near him. He was at breakfast; but he sits a long

way off. He is at one end of the long table, I am at the other. He bowed to me at a distance; he looked to me pale and very serious. Rose went out to him, as he was leaving the table, and got hold of his hand. He asked her if she knew who was a good little girl.

"Yes," she said, laughing, looking up into his face, "I am."

She told him we were going to ride. He told her he was going to ride. He was going to ride to Headley to spend the day.

"Then it will be lonesome here," said she, looking around. "It is always lonesome when you are gone! it seems lonesome up in our chamber, up in Miss Burnham's chamber, I mean, where I stay so much, if we know you are gone."

I was in conversation with others, but I heard every word. He did not reply to the last she said; they passed out together, hand in hand, into the hall.

We did shopping, rode through some beautiful private grounds, where the bright autumn flowers bloomed, where the birds flitted rapidly from bough to bough, from border to border, singing no spring or summer songs, but twittering with rapid notes, as if of the frosts that are coming, and the long journeys they must soon undertake. The leaves begin to brighten everywhere, to stiffen with age, and to moan when the wind goes through them. We went to the cemetery and braided a wreath of fading leaves for Clara's grave.

"Darling—darling—blessed, *darling* mamma!" Rose said, speaking tenderly, tenderly placing the wreath. She wept, but with less agitation than in our former visits. And, coming away, she said, "I don't feel half so bad about my dear mamma as I did before I knew all about it. I don't feel so bad about anything, now I know." She has often said to me, "I'm so glad I know; I'm so glad they all know! now I am easy everywhere. Nobody watches me now and whispers about it, and so I don't watch anybody and feel angry and bad, as I did then. Oh! Miss Burnham, you can't think how bad I felt then! I felt as though everything was turning dark, or falling to pieces, or something! I can never make you know how I felt! Now it is all over. I don't care now how much people tell; for I am ready, you see, to tell as much as any of them. I'm willing that everybody should know all; and this makes it so pleasant for everybody—being willing about things! I shouldn't have thought anything would make it so pleasant as it does just being willing about things."

I saw Mrs. Mayfield this afternoon. She

says—I just pray. I pray almost all of the time; not in set words, not in set forms; I don't mean that; but my whole heart goes up with longings to God. I just ask him to forgive me; to remove my unbelief and ingratitude. The unbelief goes, I find. The ingratitude, it seems to me, is gone. I can only ask Him to forgive me for being so blind all my days, and to help me now to see.

She told me how her feelings change with regard to everything. She had hitherto done exactly as her feeling led. Now she saw duty everywhere. For instance, she had had a miserable, craving, uneasy appetite all along, and had ate anything she pleased, without regard to its effects upon her body and her mind. Now she could not swallow the thing that would harm her; for God was everywhere, the Father of our flesh, the Father of our spirit; duty was everywhere—so it seemed to her now. “We do all fade as a leaf,” was his text yesterday; but his sermon was no dirge; it was a pæan, with here and there a few minor notes which did but give grandeur to the concord. It was the last time I shall ever hear him. He told Mrs. Harrington, this morning, that he finds he must leave this week. He told her he doubted if, another season, he will come to New England.

“He says,” added she, when she was telling me about it, “he says he wants to go a long way off. He wants to go to the old countries where decay goes on. He says he wants to see it going on. He is in profoundly low spirits; I can see that; but what it is about is more than I can make out, with any reasonable certainty. I keep thinking of you; I have the unaccountable feeling that it has something to do with you some way. But I suppose it can't be. I suppose it must be something else; yet, that it is some affair of the heart, as we say, I am sure; just as sure as if he had told me. I imagine he has got himself unpleasantly entangled somewhere; I think that must be it. Too bad, if that is the case! If it is, I hope she'll die. I do! I hope she'll be well prepared; then I hope she'll die; for this will be ever so much better for her, remember, than being married to one who isn't satisfied with her. Then I hope he and you will come together.”

But it is dinner-time.

#### *The 28th.*

Professor Hall, who sits near us at the table, told us about an herbarium he had, this morning, received by express, from his brother's family in the south part of Texas. He would bring it, when dinner was over, to the parlor. Speaking to Mr. Mayfield, on his way out, he

told him the same, inviting him to join us. So Mr. Mayfield came. But he declined being seated near us, in the chair Mrs. Harrington offered to him. No, he thanked her, he would stand. Some of the flowers and leaves were wonderfully large and beautiful, others were wonderfully curious; the others talked about them; but it seems to me that I no more than half saw them. I did not often speak; my lips seemed grown together. Mr. Mayfield did not talk as the rest did, as he does sometimes. When he said anything it was mostly to Professor Hall, and in low tones, as if he spoke solely to him.

The mail came, and Rose brought ours in. “Just one magazine for you, Mrs. Harrington; all those letters and papers for you, Mr. Hepburn; that letter and that paper for you, Mr. Mayfield; two letters for you, Miss Burnham. Guess who they are from! I know, I've seen their letters so much! Guess, if you will.”

“Is one from Alice?”

“Yes, ma'am, that is it. Now guess who this is from; it is a gentleman; he has sent you ever so many letters before! ever so many!”

I believed it was from Roosevelt; but something kept me from speaking his name there where Mr. Mayfield was standing so still, so near; so “Is it from my uncle?” I asked.

“Oh! no, no! not from him! his is such a queer hand! This is large and beautiful—see! Mr. Roosevelt's.”

I don't know why it was so still, or why it seemed to me to be so still, for a few moments. But I am sure I heard every tick of my watch; I seemed to hear hearts beating all around me. Mrs. Harrington spoke, after what seemed a long time, but what was, I suppose, in reality a very short one. “I don't see,” said she, “what business this Mr. Roosevelt has to be writing to you so often. Let me see what sort of a hand he writes. Yes, I see. He's no genius; he has hardly a bit of talent even; but is as orderly and precise as a merchant's clerk. I don't like such a hand, ever. Is he—now be honest and own it—is he your betrothed?”

“No.”

“No? that was a faint no. “Are you sure?”

“Yes, I am sure.”

“Good! that makes me glad! You must pardon me, dear, but I really do not like that hand. And, besides, there is one person in the world for you to marry; only one, in my mind; and this—isn't Mr. Roosevelt.”

I knew whom she meant. There he was, silent, reserved, standing afar off; afar off, that is, in his spirit, his sympathies, in all his life

and thoughts; but very near in person. He could not have been two feet from my chair. I felt my head bowed down, felt my heart ache. I longed to be away. I asked her if she was ready to go, and we came. I did not once look back; there was no reason why I should. I must have shown him unequivocally, at one time and another, that I prized his conversation; but for many days now he has kept it sedulously from me; there was not one reason why I should turn back, to give him a look or a word. In the pain I felt and feel now, there are reasons why I should.

*Later.*

"Precious!" said Rose, calling me by that name at the threshold.

"What, darling?"

"Mr. Mayfield has just come in from carrying Mrs. Mayfield to ride; I was out there, and he asked me if I didn't want to ride to Leeds and a good, long way. I said I guessed I did! Then he looked bright, and told me to run and ask Miss Burnham if she would like to take a long ride with him and me. You would, wouldn't you?"

No, indeed! thought I. No, indeed! no, indeed! that is something I can't bear just at this time. I am a baby just now. If I sat by him, if he said, speaking coolly, "This week I am going home," my heart would sink so low that there would be no help for it, no mastery over it. I would swallow my tears all the way; I could not speak; he would see what a baby I am, and it would be all over with me.

"No, dear," said I, "run down and tell him I am obliged to him, but am not at all ready to ride. Go, dear, and not keep him waiting any longer."

In a few moments she returned with a slip of paper in her hand. "He told me to wait a moment," said she. "I did, and he wrote this and told me to give it to you."

"If Miss Burnham will come at last," it said, "I will wait for her any length of time and count it a pleasure—the waiting and all."

So Rose ran down to tell him we would go; for something in his note—I am sure it would not be easy to tell what, the words were so few, so simple—assured and comforted me. Mrs. Hammond helped us, and in a few moments we were on the landing, where he met us, thanked us with a face of light, for coming, and led us down.

Oh! how happy I was! I did not know before that such happiness was ever felt on earth. Now and then I was sad a few moments, thinking that it would so soon be over; that probably that was the last time; that, after he was gone,

if my memory of those hours was my most precious memory, it would also be my saddest, since I would always know from it what—

And yet why should one think or write thus? I say, "Since I would always *know*—but one cannot always know; can never know how it would be with one, if in one respect, or in two, or in many respects, things could go according to one's notions of what is happiest. So, as we do not know, as there is One above us, a faithful, loving One, who does know, let all things lie in His hand, to be arranged and disposed of as He sees best.

We talked of Fichte as we rode. I told him what a clergyman, who came to exchange with uncle Julius after he was at Boscawen Plain, said to me of Fichte and of the students at Harvard College; how he said it as if approaching both Fichte and Harvard. He said, "The fact is, almost every young man, of a certain turn of mind, rather a serious, spiritual turn, comes away from Harvard tintured with these German notions. When I was at Bowdoin, I used to run down to Harvard at commencement; I used to see a good deal of the Harvard students, one time and another; I do now; and I almost always find them more or less tintured with these notions. I got hold of them, one while. One while I was all swallowed up with them. Fichte, Kant, Klopstock, Fichte, Kant, Klopstock, it was from morning till night, for awhile; and my Bible was quite laid aside. But it passed, I found, and then it was the Bible again."

And so it passes with others, Mr. Mayfield said. Fichte, Kant, and others of the metaphysical class, serve us, help us, lead us, in their time, in their place, at a certain plane in our career. They open to us a great deal that we did not see before. It is all in the Scriptures, (that is, all the *truth* they open is in the Scriptures,) but we do not understand all that the Scriptures mean, not in many a year, not in a life time. The metaphysicians help us to see many things that we did not see before. They are helps; their elucidations are helps in understanding the blessed, beautiful truths that it takes us so long to get hold of adequately, so as to see all there is in them, with all our helps, human and divine. "If the clergyman had said all," added Mr. Mayfield, "he presumed he would have said that he never loved the Bible a thousandth part so well before his studies, as when he came to it after them."

I answered, "He did say so, I remember. The Bible had been a dearer book to him ever since," he said. He was touched often, thinking how much dearer it was than all other books."

"As we all are," replied Mr. Mayfield, his head bowed. "As the young men who come out from Harvard all are; or, that is, as the most of them are who come before men to teach its truths. There are the Scriptures growing dearer and dearer, opening more and more into 'the perfect day.' Meanwhile the dust gathers upon those old helpers, Fichte and the others. Their help is with us; all that they in their human way could do for us, is with us; but there they are where they belong; here we are with the living, moving present, with God and His word. But honor be to all our helps. Gratefully, reverently should we say this to the end; long after the time has come when we, in our turn, come forward to take our place among the helpers."

"Yes," I said, loving every word he spoke. I said I was thinking of something Mrs. Brown- ing says in her "Casa Guidi Windows." It is where she speaks of Savonarola burnt in mar- tyrdom in Florence, in the year 1498, for his opposition to the corruptions of Papacy; and of the beautiful custom that has descended even to our day, of strewing the pavement where he suffered with violets, every spring, when the anniversary comes round. I remembered a part of it and repeated it.

"It were foul  
To grudge Savonarola and the rest  
Their violets! rather pay them quick and fresh!  
For that  
Is wise and righteous. We, who are the seed  
Of buried creatures, if we turned and spate  
Upon our antecedents, we were vile.  
Bring violets rather! If these had not walked  
Their furlong, could we hope to show our mile?  
Therefore bring violets!"

"Yes!" Mr. Mayfield said, pleased with the extract. He had not read the poem.

"Yes, I like that!" chimed in Rose. "'There- fore bring violets.' I didn't quite understand, darling, about the man. Did he die? Was that what it meant?"

I told her the story in such a way that she understood it.

"Thank you. And so they bring violets and lay them where he died. I wish I could; but I suppose it is too far."

Mr. Mayfield told her how far it is.

That was too far, she said. But it wasn't so far to Philadelphia, where those books were that he didn't care anything about then and let the dust be on. If she could ever go to Phila- delphia, the first thing she would do, she would go straight to the books and wipe the dust off of them; and, if she could find any violets, she would make a wreath and hang it on them. She would rather do that than anything else she could think of.

He would rather she would do that, than any- thing else *he* could think of, Mr. Mayfield said, smiling on the eager, beautiful face upturned.

And may be she would, some time, she re- plied, speaking thoughtfully. May be she would. Miss Burnham had said that they too would go long, delightful journeys together, in the vaca- tions, and perhaps they would some time go to Philadelphia where he would be. "Don't you suppose we will, some time, darling Miss Burn- ham?" she asked, with the tones of pathos so touching whenever one hears them. "I shall want to see him so after he is gone!"

I did not know, I told her; and then, after a short silence, we talked a little of his going, tears of cold lead dropping on my heart all the while. I was sick. I am sick now.

*Later.*

Alice writes—"Blue work here, without you, and with Mr. Roosevelt saying that he must go; that, hu! these October days shake him and give him a regular ague. How can I ask him to stay here and meet our December weather? He has heard about it and about our snow-drifts, he says. A man back on the hills has told him that, a few years ago—just a few, he says, not in the early days of the settlement, before our climate had had a chance to grow civilized—on the third day of April, he walked straight across lots, more than a mile, and saw nothing but the tops of the fences and walls. Did any one think he would stay here until such a winter came? I began to tell him about our air-tight stoves; but he stopped me at once, and put 'the miserable things,' as he called them, all out-of-doors. And then he laughed, looking in my face to see what a loss I felt it. I was glad to have made him laugh though, any way, and I told him so. I told him he had been sober enough to keep one frightened half out of one's wits, ever since you had been gone; and, for my part, I should be glad enough to see you back again, for the sake of his being better natured, if for nothing else.

"Had he really been so frightful?" he asked. Had I really been afraid of him? He had really been frightful, I told him. I had really been afraid of him; and I'd leave it to him if that wasn't too bad. I began half in earnest; but when I saw how sober it made him look, I laughed; for I imagine he began to think that he really had been something of a tiger. Well, he said, would I forgive him? Yes, I said, if he would be better natured so as not to make me afraid of him any more. He would try, he said; I should see how he made out. This was yesterday, when I met him at your gate; we shook hands upon what he said, and parted.

He looked as happy as could be, when we parted; but nobody can tell how he will look the next time I see him.

"Oh! but indeed; I can tell now; he is coming up to our door with something in his hand; I can't make out what; and he looks good! Now I must go down. Now I wish you were here; I am so afraid of him always, when we first meet, and until I get him to laughing and being funny. Then I am no more afraid of him than I am of anybody else. This, and because I like fun so much better than I do anything else, makes me wish so much that he would always be funny! Perhaps he would, if I could always get the courage to start him. Good-bye, for a little while—only, I do wish I could stay here, I am in such a tremble about going down! If I only had you or somebody to go down with me! Good-bye.

"*Evening.*—It was fruit that he brought us, oranges, figs, lemons; he had just got a box from New Orleans. Wasn't it good in him to come right in here with some of them? I told him it was. I wasn't at all afraid of him to-day, he seemed so good and so happy! He says he shall go South; but perhaps not so soon as he has lately been intending to. Mother had a good time seeing him so comfortable here. She never forgets how good he was to Robin, or how Robin liked to see him near him. I see plainer and plainer what a loss mother met, when she lost Robin! but she never complains. I shall never be like my mother, or half so patient and sensible. I shall always be a changing thing, going up and down, up and down. My mother is a rock, so are you. I am a reed floating, as people say. But there is no help for it, that I see. Perhaps I shall have something to sober me. Robin's death sobered me at the time. I thought it had sobered me forever; and I don't feel long at a time since, just as I felt before about things.

"When are you coming? I ask Mr. Roosevelt; and he looks disturbed and says he don't know; but he supposes before a great while now. I can't get over the impression that something is wrong, somewhere; that something troubles him whenever he recollects it. I wonder if I shall ever know what it is. I wonder who will be the one to tell me if I ever know. I suppose it won't be you; you looked so impenetrable when you said, 'I have no right to tell you!' Perhaps he will tell me some day; he seems so open, seems as though he would speak all his thoughts; still he keeps back something; there is something that he keeps watch and guard over, all the while that he lets all the

rest be seen and touched. This I can see. It makes me anxious to know, but it don't prevent my thinking everything of him; he is so gentle, so kind and pleasant. Even when he is so sober as to make me afraid of him, I always feel that he is not unkind, not cross, but troubled with some hidden anxiety. So I like him then, as well as I do any time, and I don't know but better. I think I do, better.

"But, just see! how I write, and write, and write of him! Somehow, I can't help it; somehow, he fills my mind, and always has, ever since he came, he is so different from others one sees! is so much more interesting! Don't you think so? Of course you do; of course it belongs to you to; but one can hardly see what I have to do with the affair, only, I am your and his cousin, and he was so good to Robin! Robin loved him so in his last sickness! So let me prize him; let me think as I must, that he is a jewel, that you are fortunate above all other women. And let me stop right here and subscribe myself."

In the beginning Roosevelt tells me that he has not much to say, has only to tell how sincerely he esteems me, and thanks me for all my goodness toward him, toward the child, and toward poor Clara's memory. But he wrote a long letter before he was through. "A great deal of this," said he, in conclusion, "I have said before. It is what I shall say and feel, as long as I feel and say anything, I have no doubt. I shall always know infallibly, as I do this day, that it is you who are acting nobly, rightly. I who am acting with cowardice and wrong. Nobody can see this plainer than I do; nobody can admire your action from beginning to end more than I do, or despise himself more than I do myself, when I think it over. And I do really feel it so just to her that is gone, so indispensable to the welfare of the child, that you should do precisely as you are doing, that I would not alter your course, lonely as it leaves me, if I could do it with one word. So, God bless you! I would be glad to stay until you come; I long to see you; but it will be easiest for me to go. By the time spring comes round again, I shall be over it a little, perhaps; then I can bear it; now it would upset me.

"I have got some nice oranges; I wish I could pick out the fairest one of them all for you; I know with what interest I would look them over if it were for this."

Afterward comes a postscript, in which he tells me that he may remain at Boscawen a week or two yet—he does not know—he cannot tell.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

## HELP HIM UP.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

"Help him up!"

It was but the exclamation of a child—a boy returning from school. A fine boy he was, too, with a bright and happy face that spoke of home-love and care worth having. A little fellow had been fighting, and, overpowered by superior strength, had fallen in the mud. Others stood by and saw the sport with laughter; for the conqueror defeated every attempt made by the prostrate struggler to rise, and it was then that the manly little fellow of whom I have spoken cried, "Help him up!"

His tones indignant, his brave, whole-hearted manner seemed to bring the others to reason, and more than one hand was held out to extricate the fallen. The thought was uppermost in our mind long after that, "Oh! that the spirit which animated that boy were but in constant exercise among men, what a golden world would ours be! If we, each one of us, in little matters in the narrow round of home, laying aside the selfishness and grossness of our natures, strive to help those who were fallen, to aid those who were suffering, to lighten the care of the toil-worn; bounding hearts, happy faces, good deeds, would whiten the fields of our souls with thick harvests. The spirit that, though it may not exult in the downfall of another, yet looks on with unsympathizing eye and hands shut so closely that the knuckles stand out like iron; that says, "Let him help himself. I have to help myself. Let him get out of it; he was a fool for getting in," seems to be almost universally that of mankind. It is seen not only in homes, but in society; in the circle of business; yes, it even invades the sacred precincts of Christ's church, where sometimes an unfortunate brother is shut up with bars more obdurate than those of a stone prison, and kept out. Christ provided liberally for these unfortunates. He left a mighty bequest in the treasury of His Word—gave it to us to keep and distribute, when he said, "Do ye even so to them." It seems such hard work to comprehend the height and depth, the exceeding beauty of that golden rule! Men crawl round it, and jump over it, and work themselves under it; do everything but take it up and make hearts glad with its priceless gold; do everything but warm one,

and feed another, and shelter yet another; and give to some, gentle words of encouragement of more worth to them than worlds, if they only come at the right time, when they are most needed.

"But we helped him once, twice, yes, the third time—and see, he is down again."

"Forgive seventy and seven times," said Christ; if ye love your friends, what recompense have ye? Love your enemies. So if you wish your well-to-do brother good speed, because he has need neither of the help of your pocket or your brains, what merit have you? But help him up whom the world hath gone hard with; help him when you see men, strong in power and position, with their feet upon his neck. Help him up, even if the mire of adversity clings to his very garments, and he has lost all respectability of appearance.

There are so many close-fisted Christians who pray, and talk, and walk by rule (not Bible rule), that the faith of outsiders who judge of goodness merely by that little light within, is shaken in all profession; and the whole-hearted, money-giving, man-loving, church members, of whom there are a noble number, are judged by the narrow-minded whose pockets are not converted if their souls are. We have known such who refused even to say a good word for a sufferer, because he had, some time or another, a long way back, said some unpalatable word that they never could get out of their narrow-necked minds, but that like a cork had been bobbing there for years. Was the spirit of Christ in that satisfaction with which they paid up the old score? Was that spirit in the smooth refusal—in the eye that sparkled with gratified vengeance?

We went, one Lord's day, to one of these small vials of sanctity, and asked for a donation—an order to get a bottle of medicine for a sick and dying man.

"I never do business on the Sabbath," was his cold reply. We leave comment to the reader.

"Help him up!" Yes, take the words of that pitying school-boy along with you to your shops, to your homes, your churches. Let your impulses go out like living tendrils, and



not cling like moss, withered and dead, to the black dust of selfishness. Be men, be women closed doors of your heart. Open your soul after God's own heart, and earn a right to that to the sunshine of charity—let the dews of inheritance which fadeth not away. heavenly pity drop within and wash away the

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## LILIAN EARLE'S BELLESHIP.

BY GABRIELLE LEE.

LILIAN EARLE was the orphan ward of Mr. Elliott. She had been domesticated in her new home, about six months, when, one morning, as she was gathering flowers in the conservatory, her guardian's only son entered. Jerome Elliott was now about thirty. He was tall, deep-chested, and powerful in frame; with quite a distinguished air: the ideal of an accomplished gentleman. He stood, for some time, regarding her, as if he was getting her "off by heart;" and at last said, "Do you know, Lilian, I think ambition is a decided trait of yours?" "Well, what then?" returned Lilian, coloring slightly. "Only in that case I should like to know in what direction your ambition soars. Come now, tell me." Lilian looked at him with a frank, clear gaze, then said, simply, "I have thought, ever since I can remember, that I should like to be beautiful and admired." "But you are not beautiful," said Jerome, decisively. Lilian, appearing nowise disconcerted at this remark, inclined her head on one side to inspect the bouquet she had finished arranging, and rejoined, quietly, "I know very well I am not." "But," continued the gentleman, "that doesn't prevent you from obtaining admiration." Lilian raised her head in expectation of further information. "Yes," repeated her companion, "that is no reason why you should not be admired. In fact," he continued, with sudden energy, "I am determined that, this coming winter, you shall be the belle of the season." Lilian laughed merrily, as if utterly repudiating the idea. "Indeed," said Jerome, slightly piqued, yet with an air of conscious power, "it would be a pity if, with my experience of the world, I should not be able to make a little girl like you the fashion, if I like." The young girl bit her lip, as if she scarcely enjoyed this cavalier way of being placed in the position of a puppet. After a pause, Jerome remarked meditatively, "I suppose there is very little society in Monmouth?" "Oh! dear me!" said Lilian, brightening up, and raising her eye-brows expressively, "I should think not. About once a fortnight or so, my aunt gave tea-parties, the solemnest affairs you can conceive of. Almost all the people who came to them were ever so old; and if there happened to be two or three young

people, we scarcely dared say anything for fear of being frowned down. There were two maiden ladies who were my especial horror. They always wore black worsted mits, and talked principally about recipes for puddings and cakes, and funerals; and if one of us youngsters happened to introduce a bit of gaiety they'd shake their heads mournfully, and say, 'Poor young things! what do they know about the uncertainties of life?'" Jerome laughed heartily at this account; Lilian joined in a moment, then went in with increased animation, "I often used to wonder what a real party was like, and think how nice it would be to go to one in a ball dress, and dance ever so much to fine music, and be——" Lilian stopped herself, but Jerome finished her sentence by adding, "Very much admired by every one." Lilian's blush showed her sentence had been finished correctly, and her companion, looking at her kindly, said, "Never mind, child, you shall see what will happen this winter."

Some months afterward, when Lilian, with a young girl's obliviousness, had almost forgotten this conversation, she received her first invitation to a "real party." She attired herself for the evening with a fluttering heart; then went down stairs where Jerome was waiting to accompany her. He scrutinized her dress of rich gray silk; then, turning to his mother, remarked, in a disappointed tone, "Lilian's dress is very well; but is it not rather dull for the evening?" "But you know," rejoined Mrs. Elliott, apologetically, "she is just out of mourning." "True," responded her son, only half-contented. Lilian felt her companion did not entirely approve of her appearance, and her buoyant spirits were dashed. Now Jerome Elliott had "brought out" several young ladies, and his method of conducting the campaign was this: He was well aware that nothing was so sure to attract attention to a woman as the circumstance of her possessing one persistent admirer, especially if the latter were known to be a man of taste. As he himself had once remarked, in explaining his tactics, "When society sees a man very devoted, and all that, to a woman, it naturally wonders what there can be attractive about her, and

insists upon an introduction to find out, and so, with a little good management, the whole thing is accomplished." This was the course our manoeuvrer had determined to pursue in regard to Lillian; but, as far as success was concerned, the first appearance of the latter in society was a decided failure. Jerome was a model of attention, introduced several gentlemen to his charge, who invited her to dance, as in duty bound; but, somehow, the invitation was not repeated, and if anybody inquired who Lillian might be, it was simply because the well known Jerome Elliott was her escort. "Well?" said Jerome, interrogatively, after they had returned home. "Oh! I have enjoyed myself beyond everything," responded Lillian, clasping her hands; "the music and flowers were such delightful novelties." "And how about being a belle?" "Oh! me," replied Lillian, with a little sigh, "I wondered how I could ever have dreamed of such a thing even, particularly when I saw the ladies come into the dressing-room, and step out of their wraps in lovely floating dresses, like princesses in a fairy tale, seeming so easy and self-assured. I forgot everything in admiring them." "You simple little thing!" said Jerome, somewhat vexed, yet pleased withal with the young girl's frankness and simplicity. "Never mind, your turn will come yet." But Lillian shook her head gravely, bade him good night, and left him.

The "gay season" was commencing, and the universal esteem in which the Elliotts were held was shown by the numerous invitations poured in upon them. As Mrs. Elliott declared herself too much of a "home body" to undertake the duties of a *chaperone*, her son continued to accompany Lillian. The second and third appearance of our heroine attracted but little more attention than the first: she was simply "Miss Earle, who had been left as a legacy to the guardianship of Mr. Elliott." "Not remarkable in any way," would generally be the comment appended by the informant. This judgment, however, as all superficial judgments are apt to be, was altogether incorrect. Lillian was a girl of unusually keen perceptions, and in a short time she had learned what duller comprehensions would have taken years to have acquired, and, in any case, her nature was such that it was almost impossible that she should be otherwise than easy and natural under all circumstances. One morning Jerome said, as she took her place at the breakfast-table, "Lillian, we have a famous invitation for a week from to-night. Mrs. Granville, an especial friend of mine by-the-way, is to give what Brown, of New

York, would term the "finest blow-out of the season." After breakfast, Jerome lingered about Lillian's chair a little, then said, hesitatingly, "It is not, perhaps, quite legitimate for a man to interfere with the delicate mysteries of a lady's toilet; but, Lillian, could you not contrive to get up something a little more fanciful than you have hitherto worn? Something in blue, for instance. You are fair, and I know enough of the subject to be certain that blue would be becoming to you." "Well," replied Lillian, half-sighing, "I'll try. I think I can guess what you mean." For the rest of the week Lillian remained in strict seclusion, Mrs. Elliott's seamstress, whose services she had borrowed, being almost her sole companion. A day or so before the evening for which Mrs. Granville's invitation had been issued, Jerome captured Lillian on the stairs, and laughingly asked, "Well, am I not to have a glimpse of this wonderful costume you are getting in readiness?" Lillian, shaking her head saucily, replied, "Not till the time comes." "Oh! you wicked little mystery, am I not even to know the color?" Lillian leaned her head on one side meditatively, then replied, "Yes, I'll tell you that. Who suggested blue? Well, it's sapphire blue, the queen of colors." Jerome looked undisguisedly pleased at this deference to his taste, and allowed Lillian to escape. "See here, maman," said the former, entering his mother's sitting-room, "there is something about that little girl after all, isn't there?" It is just possible that Lillian's deference to his taste might have had something to do with this conclusion. "The men are so stupid, they won't find it out. If she were one of your giggling chatterers now, she'd be all the toast." Mrs. Elliott looked rather surprised at this outbreak, and replied, gently, that Lillian was a "good girl," and quoted, "Handsome is that handsome does." The lady's son appeared to be rather incredulous of this statement, and, murmuring something about a business engagement, went to keep it. He had just gone when the object of this conversation came dancing into the room, saying, "Come, maman," (she had taken a fancy to Jerome's pet name for his mother, and would use no other,) "come. I have something to show you," and, leading Mrs. Elliott into her room, displayed the cause of her seclusion in triumph. "Why, Lillian, this is pretty," said the elder lady, contemplating the dress laid out in state upon the bed. It was of a gauzy silken material, with numerous flounces daintily embroidered in medallions of silver. "Do you think Jerome will like it?"

asked Lillian. "Why, of course, child. How could he help it?" "And will you assist me to dress when the time comes?" "That I will," said Mrs. Elliott, fondly.

The latter kept her word, and when the looked-for evening came would scarcely allow Lillian to do anything for herself, calling to mind various reminiscences of her own party-going days in order to assist Lillian in determining some nice question of attire. At length the young girl's toilet was completed, and in answer to her modest "Will I do, maman?" received delighted assurances from this lady that, beyond a doubt, she would look as well as the best, and added, "But let Jerome see you before you put on your wraps." Lillian went down stairs, and, opening the door half-timidly, stood before Jerome with a demure, "Your mother thought before starting that you would, perhaps, like to see if I was quite *comme il faut*." The gentleman contemplated the young girl's attire from head to foot, looked closely at the deep meeklin lace falling in delicate folds from the shoulder; then smiling, well pleased, said, "You want but one thing to make your attire complete," and handed her a box. Lillian opened it, and drew forth a necklace of sapphires, with bracelets to match. She gazed upon them, dumb with delight, for it was the first present of the kind she had ever received. The stones were as rare as they were beautiful, the settings of that deep yellow gold that shines itself almost like a gem. The jewels altogether reminded one of nothing so much as bits of Italian sky enshrined in a setting of sunbeams. "Oh! may I keep them?" asked Lillian, turning to Mrs. Elliott, who had just entered. "Of course, you foolish child," said the lady, clasping them on, and telling the two the sooner they were off the better, as they were already late. Lillian, having reached the place of their destination, first disencumbering herself of numerous wrappings, gave one long, admiring look in the mirror at her new possessions; then, drawing on her delicate kid gloves, stepped out of the dressing-room, and found Jerome waiting for her. He smiled approval; and the knowledge that her fastidious critic was pleased made her cheeks glow and her eyes sparkle. "Are we to go to the room now?" she asked, her breath coming and going a little hurriedly. Jerome leaned over the balustrade, and listening a moment, said, "They are just finishing a quadrille; let us wait." This discriminating gentleman was well aware that the most favorable opportunity for entering a room is when the dance is over, for that no longer occupying

the attention of those assembled, they are at liberty to observe more closely the new arrivals. He was not disappointed in the success of his stratagem, for when Lillian entered the crowded apartment, leaning upon his arm, all eyes were leveled at the new-comers, as they passed on to greet the hostess. "How exceedingly well Miss Earle is looking to-night!" said those who had met her before. "Who is that unique-looking girl?" inquired a man, whose critical taste in matters of the kind was indisputable. The phrase "took" immediately. Miss Earle was "unique." Miss Earle was a young lady "out of the common run." "Sapphires—something new," suggested one lady to another. "And that lace is ravishing," ejaculated her companion, adjusting her eye-glass to make "assurance doubly sure" that it was real meeklin. "There must be something fascinating about her," was the final masculine verdict, "or Elliott would not display such continuous devotion."

Half an hour after her entrance, Miss Earle was secured for every dance during the remainder of the evening. Jerome looked on, serene and satisfied. He had accomplished his object, and thus began Lillian Earle's belleship. As the evening passed on, however, this gentleman grew somewhat discontented: older, and somewhat worn by contact with the world, he was scarcely able to understand how Lillian could yield herself entirely to the pleasure of being admired. "How pleased she looks to hear those fools compliment her!" he muttered to himself, thus designating some young men surrounding her, whose modicum of brains was not above the average. The evening Lillian found so delightful came to a close; and, as Jerome drew her wrappings more closely about her before stepping into the open air, he said, his cynicisms having, by this time, been replaced by feelings of pleasure at her success, "Well, little one, you have been happy for one night, at least?" Lillian, yielding with girlish *abandon* to the impulse of the moment, passed her arm through his, and replied, with a smile and blush it was pretty to see, "And I owe it all to you." As they drove homeward, that smile and blush occurred to Jerome only to give him dissatisfaction. His idea of the susceptibility of young girls was, perhaps, somewhat overstrained; besides, this experience had taught him no mean opinion of his own power of fascination, and he reflected, "What if Lillian has misunderstood the character of my attentions! Suppose she should have a deeper feeling than that of friendly liking toward me!"

It was the habit of these two, when they reached home, to discuss for awhile the events of the evening; but, to-night, neither seemed disposed for conversation. Lillian, disencumbering herself of her wrappings, sank into a large arm-chair beside the fire, whose clear, warm brightness amply atoned for the dimness of the room. This evening had witnessed Lillian's first triumph, and it was very sweet. She sat with head slightly bent, and hands folded on her knee, a smile just parting her lips. Her dress fell in blue floating waves about her, its silver medallions gleaming softly like moonlight, while lambent azure flames shot out from the sapphires she wore upon her arms and breast. Whatever else was lacking, the charm of youth and grace were in her aspect and attitude. Jerome walked slowly up and down the room for a time, wishing to say, delicately and kindly, what it was difficult to say at all. He called to mind several instances he had known where misconstrued attentions had disturbed the peace of women whose only fault had been a credulity too entire; then, glancing at Lillian, thought silently, "The girl reminds one of a night in June—all moonlight and azure." Finally he said, aloud, "Lillian!" "Well?" came the answer, in a dreamy, lingering tone. Jerome paused a moment, then went on, the very effort he was making giving a hardness to his tones that would not otherwise have been there. "It is important, Lillian, we should thoroughly comprehend one another. You will, of course, understand my conduct, from the first, has been founded upon sentiments such as a brother might possess for a favorite sister." No sooner had he thus spoken than he repented his words. For Lillian, allowing him no time for explanation, rose with delicate eyes, cheek, and neck stained with sudden flashes of color, and, passionately, retorted, "You must have thought me dull, indeed, to have misinterpreted the attention you have shown me. I entirely appreciated your motives. In fact, you are the last man in the world I would have chosen—" She stopped abruptly, as if remembering that the piece of information she intended dispensing was not entirely called for; then, hastily gathering up the articles of attire scattered about, with head erect and haughty, left the room. No sooner had she retired than Jerome finished the sentence she had left incomplete. "The last man in the world." An unaccountable feeling here arrested the speaker, and he abruptly substituted, "I hate to see a woman show temper." Could he have witnessed Lillian's conduct upon

reaching her room, this prejudice would have been still further shocked; for, unclasping the jewels he had given her, she threw them indignantly away, to bury her face in her hands, and sob as if her heart would break. The triumphs of the evening were more than outweighed by the thought, so bitter to a woman's pride, that any man should dare to suppose she had given him her love unsought. Had Lillian completed her unfinished sentence, she would only have spoken the truth. Marriage had found but a small place in her thoughts, and if she possessed an ideal at all, she had not realized it as Jerome. He was to be looked up to as her senior, and his opinions carefully consulted, nothing more. Lillian, however, was not one to cherish resentment. The next morning found her remorsefully calling to mind Jerome's kindness and constant interest in her welfare. She waited till she heard him pass her door on his way to the breakfast-room; then, slipping softly after him, held out her hand with a simple "Please let us be friends, Jerome." The hand was taken, the gentleman bowing a little stiffly, and a peace thus concluded. After this the two were capital friends. The night at Mrs. Granville's had decided Lillian's success as probable. Rare and unusual attributes possessed by her rendered it certain. A fine tact in discerning character, and a nice art in adapting herself to its intricacies, made her sought after wherever she came. The women wondered at toilets which could be so simple and at the same time so exquisite, forgetting that an artistic arrangement of color and harmony of form will give a greater pleasure to the eye than the most elaborate elegance, where these are lacking. Jerome watched Lillian's star rising toward the zenith with a feeling of quiet satisfaction; for he felt, and rightly, its ascent was owing, in a measure, to his successful generalship. It was not long before Lillian quietly and gracefully glided into her place as one of "society's queens," and it was almost sad to watch those whose hands had, until now, wielded the sceptre, endeavor to increase their waning charms by striving to attain the delicious archness of Lillian's manner, in which effort they succeeded, as well as does the perfumer when he endeavors to distill into an essence the inimitable fragrance of the violet.

So the weeks passed on, and Jerome watched the still increasing train of admirers that came to bend before the young girl, whom, not long since, he had thought it worth while to patronize, and wondered at the dewy freshness of soul, the feverish breath of admiration could not destroy.

What thoughts slid into his mind during this time became evident one day. Lillian had been ill all the morning, and came down stairs bearing on her face that sweet, child-like expression, that suffering, patiently endured, sometimes bestows. Jerome drew forward the arm-chair, placed cushions for her head and feet, then sat down beside her. Presently, without any warning, he said abruptly, "Lillian, are you still of the same mind as on the evening my unmanly impertinence provoked you into intimating that I was the last man in the world you would choose for a husband?" Lillian rose quickly and answered almost sternly, "I certainly have seen no reason to change my opinion," and so saying, withdrew. In the solitude of her own room, should you ask me if a secret exultation filled her heart at the unconditional surrender of the man who had given such a cruel blow to her girlish pride, I should not dare deny it, for she was nothing more than woman. A few weeks afterward, Jerome recovered sufficiently from this last rebuff to return to his amicable relations, by inviting Lillian to drive out with him. "Thank you, but I have an engagement," returned Lillian, briefly. Jerome's face grew pale and angry; and afterward Lillian, looking out, saw the large piebald horse he was apt to ride when disturbed or impatient, standing at the door. "I wish I had gone with him," she said, half-aloud, "then he would have used the coupe; I don't at all like the appearance of that animal to-day."

Lillian had, indeed, reason to repent her refusal; for, when she returned from keeping her "engagement," she found an anxious and terrified household, for Jerome had been violently thrown from his horse, and lay insensible. "A compound fracture of the leg," said the physician, meditatively. "But he will recover?" inquired Lillian, with a white, horror-stricken face. "If God will," was the grave reply; and she who asked pondered the answer in her heart, repeating it wearily to herself, and wondering if she had not forgotten, for a long time back, that there is an absolute Guide and Disposer over the affairs of men. With wistful, anxious eyes she watched beside the helpless sufferer, who but a little while since had been so vigorous and full of the confidence of strong manhood, watched him wandering in the weary paths of sickness and delirium, calling out often in a tone of sad reproach, "Lillian, why are you so cold? I was never unkind to you but once," and she who listened could not but remorsefully acknowledge that the sick man spoke the truth.

But it was not yet Jerome's time to die, and,

after weeks of illness, he recovered sufficiently to make his appearance in the family sitting-room, where Lillian found him seated gloomily, the crutches by whose instrumentality he had accomplished the labor, resting beside him. She came forward with a smile, saying, "I am so glad you are well again." "I had better have died, I am lame for life; this limb will never be fit for anything again," he replied, bitterly striking the offending member. Lillian laid her hand on his with a soft "Hush, dear Jerome. It is God's will, and He does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men." Jerome had never heard Lillian speak so before, had never witnessed such tender womanliness in her aspect, and he became quiet as a little child, repeating to himself often through the day, "She called me dear Jerome." "I am invited to a grand affair to-night, a wedding party," said Lillian, with sparkling eyes, for she had been closely confined to the house during Jerome's illness. "Are you?" returned the latter with an effort at his old lightness of tone, "you must let me see you in your evening attire." "Only when I am in evening attire?" asked Lillian, playfully. Jerome made no reply, but his silence abashed his companion more than any words could have done. Through the day Lillian could not resist thinking often of the contrast between Jerome of a short time since—so vigorous in health, petted by society, and accomplished in every art that could give pleasure—and the Jerome of now, when all these things had receded from his grasp. And thus holding the dangerous "child pity" against her heart, how could she have guessed it would turn to love within her arms?

When Lillian came down that evening, it was in a simple home toilet, and carrying a hood in her hand. "I thought you were going out," remarked Jerome, in a surprised tone. "Not to-night; you promised to teach me German some time, I would like to begin now," and, sitting down in a low chair beside him, she opened the book, saying with pouting grace, "Come, begin." "But how is this?" persisted Jerome, "I thought you were so fond of gaiety. Why do you not go?" "Because," said Lillian, blushing deeply, "I would rather stay with you." Jerome looked searchingly into the face beside him, and certainly found something there that had never met his gaze before. "Oh! Lillian, Lillian!" he exclaimed, almost with a groan, "if I were not a miserable cripple, I might stand a chance with you yet." Lillian drooped her head, and answered with a smile that matched her voice in softness. "If it were

not for that, you would stand no chance at all." The inference was obvious. What had been denied him in the arrogance of his strength, was now accorded him to be the consolation of his misfortune. They sat in silence for a long time, until at length Jerome said reverently, "You were right, Lilian, He doth not willingly

afflict us. On losing the use of my limb I have found you."

Having told how Lilian's belleship began, I have only to add here it ended. From henceforth she relinquished the admiration of the many, to find abundant compensation in the love of one.

## LINDEN WALD.

BY MARY W. JANVRIN, AUTHOR OF "PEACE."

"You like the paintings, my little fellow?"

The words were uttered by a rich man—a patron of art—Judge Stuart, who stood in a studio where pictures eloquent in beauty leaned down from the dark draperied walls; and the little ragged, barefooted newsboy, who had come in thither and flung down the morning paper, then paused a moment to gaze with hushed breath upon the pictures ere he moved away, replied,

"Yes, sir. They seem, to me, like looking into heaven."

There was a kindling of the deep hazel eyes under the tanned forehead—a strange working of the mobile mouth—a reverent look upon the delicately moulded features; and, losing the consciousness of his bare feet in the light of those genius-enkindled eyes, you would have forgotten that a child of poverty stood before you.

The judge smiled, and looked down upon him. The boy's criticism had a freshness and originality about it that struck him. "We do get near heaven often, I think myself, through the open doors of art. How would you like to become a painter, my lad?"

"Oh! sir!" and the boy drew a deep inspiration. His hazel eyes were effulgent as blazing stars; his lips were all a-quiver with tremulous lines; his thin fingers clenched convulsively over the file of morning papers. No other word was spoken save that passionate exclamation.

"Do you think you could draw?" asked the judge, studying the lad's face. "Here—sketch something!" handing him a pencil and sheet of paper. "Almost every boy can draw a house or tree."

The lad dropped his file of newspapers, and, taking the pencil and paper, sat down at one of the little tables in the studio. It was early morning; there were but few visitors, and they

stood with the artist at the farther end of the room before a painting on the easel; so the boy feared nothing, but was encouraged by the kindly tones of the judge, and sat down to do his bidding.

"Please, sir, I'd rather draw your *face*!" he said, looking up.

"My *portrait*?" Ah, well! I'll sit for it!" said the judge, in amused tones, laughing and seating himself close by, for he had taken a fancy to be pleased at the boy's singular manner and words.

A few outlines—a few bold, free touches, and, strange to say, the likeness of the judge—his bold, massive features, his proud, stately head—grew beneath the lad's pencil. And the judge gazed on in quiet wonder.

"Ritie, come hither!"

A beautiful girl of eight summers—the patrician child of the patrician judge, with graceful form, rare face of girlish loveliness, and step light as the young gazelle's—left the side of a lady at the other end of the studio, and bounded toward her father, who sat leaning over the table, at which also sat the ragged, fourteen year old boy, his sketch finished.

"Ritie, look at this! And tell me if you know who it is."

"Why, papa, it is *you*! Did *you* do this?" and the girl turned to the boy artist.

"Yes, Miss."

A look of wonder stole into the girl's eyes, for she had scanned his rags, his bare feet, and then again looked up into his flashing hazel eyes, and upon the broad, high forehead shaded by masses of disordered chestnut hair. Then she again looked on the outlined portrait, and laughed.

"Why, papa, how funny! It is just *like* you! Your nose, and mouth, and the way you hold your head. How *could* he do it?"



"That is nothing to what I have done, Miss," said the lad, quietly. "I have my little room full of them at home—pictures I have made—sketches I have drawn when I have been resting at the corners of the streets, of horses, drays, people. I draw every day."

"Where do you live? Don't your mother like to have you make pictures? Papa says I shall learn to draw when I am old enough," said Ritie Stuart, approaching the ragged newsboy, and laying her little white hand on his jacket sleeve.

"My mother and father are dead. I sleep, nights, in my little attic room in C—— street, and day times I sell papers."

There was a touching cadence in that reply, which told of loneliness and poverty that went to the heart of the judge's daughter. "I am so sorry!" she said, impulsively. "Papa, did you hear him say his mother and father were dead?"

"I did, my daughter!" and he turned away, for a mist was in his own eyes. Yes, the judge who daily sat on the bench, and condemned or acquitted men and women brought before the tribunal of justice, with as little outward manifestation of emotion as the stone pillars before the City Hall, was looking through a mist at the painting on the wall; while his only and petted daughter, in her rich frock and ermine-bordered hood, stood with her tiny hand nestled close in the thin one of the ragged newsboy.

"What should you like most in the world, if papa could give it to you?" she asked. "To dress well, and go to school, and ride in our carriage?"

"I should like to learn to paint pictures such as these," answered the lad, with flashing eyes. "Oh! if I could study *how* to paint!" and his breath came thick, and a faint crimson broke up through his thin cheeks.

The judge moved away; and, crossing the floor, drew aside the artist of the studio, and talked a few minutes earnestly with him. Then the two gentlemen came back to the spot where the newsboy and the judge's daughter stood together.

"This is the boy," said the judge. "And this the sketch," handing the artist the rough-drawn portrait.

The artist gazed upon it, then upon the lad. "What is your name?" he asked. "And what do you do?"

"Rupert Lindenwald, sir!" was the reply. "I sell papers."

"And you would like to learn to become an artist?"

"Yes, sir!" The boy's cheek was crimson now, and his lips parted.

"Then you shall. Judge Stuart has arranged it with me. To-morrow you may come and take your first lesson," and the artist went back to his easel again.

"Oh! sir!" began the lad; but was interrupted.

"No thanks, my boy; but study and learn all you can, and I shall be repaid. I like you; and mean that you shall have advantages. Here, pet, give him this, and tell him to buy a new suit," and the judge placed a golden double eagle in his daughter's hand. "After to-morrow, Rupert, your teacher will place you in a nice boarding-house, where all your wants will be attended to. Once in a while I shall want to see you, to ask you how you are getting along," and he placed his card in the boy's hand. "Come, now, pet! Go call Miss Grover, for we must leave," and presently the judge, his daughter, and the lady governess left the studio together.

And the lad, with his file of papers on his arm, stood many moments on the pavement, watching the span of splendid grays till out of sight, and smiled back upon the sweet face of little Ritie, the judge's daughter, as he looked after her through the carriage window.

Ten years have gone by.

The world of fashion are thronging up Beacon street, and pressing in through the noble vestibule of the Athenæum, for there is a great painting there on exhibition. The world of fashion, I said, because it is *le mode* for such to affect art, and, with raised *lorgnettes*, to criticise paintings, and talk of "light," and "shade," and "perspective," and "tone," and "coloring;" but not only were such entering in that temple where dwells imprisoned beauty and grace—for, among the many who bent their steps thitherward, were the *connoisseur*, the artist, and the lover of the beautiful, whether spell-bound in marble, or enwrought in canvas upon the gallery walls.

With hushed voices, and no sound save the rustling of some lady's rich silk, or the click of the spring of some opened opera-glass case, the group in the apartment devoted to the painting became denser. And all eyes were bent upon the rare creation which hung before them.

"Where is the artist? Brother said he arrived at the Winthrop, last night, and I thought we might see him here!" said one elegant, Beacon street belle to another. "Ah! *that* must be him, talking to Mrs. Delancey!" and her beautiful eyes rested on a tall, distinguished, noble-

looking young man, in low conversation with the lady patroness of art in the leading circles of the Tri-mountain City. "She knows him then, and he will be at her reunion to-night!" and straightway, instead of the dream of beauty imprisoned on the canvas before her, there rose before the mental vision of the elegant belle a picture of crowded drawing-rooms, and the glitter of silks and jewels, and the flush of a new conquest.

"You see, Bella," she went on, in a low whisper, "it is worth one's while to have this new star in one's train—so young, so talented, and so famous. They say he took several prizes in the academy at New York—and that his pictures were among the works of the first artists in Rome. He is elegant-looking! Such a fine form! such eyes! and then so polished. Mrs. Delancey seems more than ordinarily pleased. But look, as I live, there is that governess, Miss Stuart! I wonder who took pity on her, and sent her a ticket? They say she is proud as Lucifer, and keeps up just as though her father had not died so involved; but she can't expect to keep her place in society long. Brother Ned is always prating about her beauty—calls her 'statuesque'—but I can't see that she is more than passable." And the haughty belle leveled her opera-glass full at a tall and beautiful girl clad in mourning, whose face, pale, but lit by eyes of deepest blue, was framed in a wealth of dark-brown hair, who just then had glided into the gallery.

"I wonder if Mrs. Delancey has invited *her*?" queried the companion of the Beacon street belle, the equally haughty, though chatty Miss Vernon.

"Possibly. You know she thinks a good deal of *family*, and Miss Stuart's father was a man of eminence when living. But, for my part, when people sink to the level of teachers and governesses, I think it best to drop them. Ned was lecturing me the other day about her 'spirit of independence,' in earning her own living rather than come on her friends; but, for my part, I can't see the harm of her accepting assistance from them. The Cheneys and Hobarts are connected with her, I believe; and they hold her up in society, I suppose. But do look! As I live, she is talking with Mrs. Delancey—and now with the *artist*, Lindenwald! And see! how self-assured, too! One would think she had known him all her life!" And the vexed and haughty Miss Livingston bit her lip with spirit, and turned her gaze resolutely upon the painting, though her thoughts wandered to the artist.

But, strange to say, the blue eyes of Miss Stuart—though long and appreciatingly had they lingered many a time before upon a kindred creation from artists' brushes—*now* were scarcely turned upon this one. In her delight at again meeting, in this honored and talented man, the boy of ten years before, who had been the grateful *protege* of her generous father, she quite ignored the object of her visit to the Athenæum Gallery—and so her hour of leisure was passed in conversation. There was much to say—many subjects to be touched upon which could not be mentioned amid that crowd, for, afar in the Old World, and busy with his works, the young painter had not learned the sad news of the sudden death of his early patron, nor the fact that out of his once noble fortune only a wreck had been preserved for his orphan child; but they parted with the promise to meet again before many hours had sped.

And no encomium from the crowd gathered there in the gallery—no praise fell half so sweetly upon his ear, as Miss Stuart's few words when they separated at the end of the hour, she to return to her pupils, and she said sweetly, "I must come again, Mr. Lindenwald, to see your painting; to-day I have only seen *you*. But I shall study it, some time, for I know you have painted your soul into it!"

"Not *wholly*. There is a portion left, of heart and soul to worship *you* with, Ritie Stuart!" was Lindenwald's mental response as he watched her tall, queenly, yet graceful figure gliding away.

The season was over. Opera, theatre, concert, ball, and reunion, and Athenæum exhibition, and musical *matinee*, were at an end; and the fashionable world of Trimount was in that quiescent, dormant state just preceding its summer flitting. For a few brief weeks jaded belles *must* pause to recuperate a little before again launching out into the round of gayety at watering-places; but, principally, must they forego morning visits, and afternoon rides, and evening *routs*, for long closetings with their dress-makers, regarding the brilliant gala attire in which they were to soon appear, like butterflies emerging from the chrysalis state.

Day by day, Hovey's, Chandler's, and Warren's were thronged with busy shoppers, while the spans and carriages waited outside the curbstone; and the sleek gloved drivers read the morning papers while their mistresses selected grenadines and "pine apple" silks within. Jones, Shreve & Brown, sent home incredible sets of jewelry; and Demarest's work-women were never busier than then.

Summer hats and bathing suits were packed away in trunks, whose folded contents proclaimed the utter fallacy of a belief in that popular superstition of the day, viz: that a lady can be expected to visit a watering-place with less than the accredited thirty trunks, each crowded with "nothing to wear."

In her dressing-room, amid a bevy of sewing girls, sat Miss Livingstone, overturning piles of costly fabrics, and giving orders to the dress-maker regarding the make and trimmings of this or that robe, wrapper, or ball-dress. A shadow of discontent was on her white forehead, and her tone at times was sharper than the ordinary code of lady-like courtesy warranted; for unrest was at her heart.

The schemes of the admiration-loving belle had not wholly prospered as she would have desired them to. Really interested in, and as much in love with, the artist Lindenwald, as her haughty, cold nature was capable of loving any man, she had not been able to enchain him to her side. Her elegance, her acknowledged position as queen of fashion, had failed to win more than the ordinary courtesies which the true gentleman renders to all. In vain had he been an honored guest at select *soirees*, or musical *matinees*—in vain had a manœuvring mamma and willing brother invited him to their magnificent home, and brought him into contact with the elegant Florence; he had not surrendered.

Therefore was it, that, closeted with her dress-makers, and busy with her outfit for Newport, whither the world of "her set" were going, the belle and beauty was doubly anxious for the elegance of the wardrobe which was to act as a frame to the battery of charms, which she had determined to bring to bear upon the artist until he surrendered, fully and unconditionally, her captive.

"This grenadine must be made with the full overskirt—and the mull with the flounces trimmed with ruches—and the jaconets, and the wrappers, Miss Ellwell, you will trim those as you did Miss Vernon's last week; and the ball-dress must be trimmed also with that Valenciennes. That goat's hair—of course you know I want the shawl cape; and the others—well, I leave those to your taste and skill!" and, tossing the heap of dry-goods back upon the lounge and bed, she turned her attention to a casket of jewels just sent home.

"Miss Vernon is in the drawing-room!" said the servant, at the door; and, laying down the casket, Florence Livingstone descended to meet her friend.

"Why, Bella, what brings you out this morning? Haven't finished your shopping yet? I'm bored to death with dress-makers; but, thank fortune! it will be over soon—the fitting and directing—and I can leave then. My pearl set has just been sent up; and I am delighted with it. I like pearls. They suit my style, Bella."

"Yes, they *are* becoming to you, Flor; but do you want to know what I came in for? Only to tell you the news—I know it will surprise you as much as it did me, and all the rest of us—for I've just seen Mrs. Delancey, and she knew nothing of it. What do you think?—the artist has married Miss Stuart!"

"Lindenwald!"

Miss Livingstone's face was slightly pale; but she had strong command over her feelings, and did not betray them, save by her exclamation of surprise.

"Why, yes! And nobody knew of the engagement at all, unless it were the Hobarts and Cheney's, the bride's friends. They were married quietly last evening in St. Paul's, and go to New York, and perhaps by-and-by to Newport. We shall probably meet them there. They say that they sail for Europe in September. It was a brilliant match for that poor governess. I wonder how she managed to secure him? I date it, Flor, from the day we saw them at the Athenæum; and you remember how constantly he scanned her face as they stood conversing. Well, she's secured him, and there'll be one cavalier the less for us to frill our caps for. Who shall we see at Newport, I wonder? I'm dying for a new sensation—somebody *new*. Artists I never fancied—never could talk about 'the old masters,' and 'tone,' and 'coloring,' with you and Mrs. Delancey, you know, Flor. But I must hasten! Only stepped in a moment to give you the news. Will bid you good morning, and send you back to your dress-makers!" and the lively, chatty Miss Vernon hurried away, while Florence Livingstone went back to her fashions and jewels with a "broken dream, but not a broken heart," since every one knows that belles' hearts do not break so easily.

A month later, in the *salons* of Newport she met the artist Lindenwald and his lovely bride. Not attired in richest silks, or decked in flashing jewels, neither the cynosure of a crowd of fashionable admirers, walked the happy Rutie; but content to shine by the reflex of the light which encircled her talented husband, and made his converse sought by the highly cultivated group one may always meet mixed with the crowd of pleasure-seekers, the fine gold blended with the dross, she won golden opinions from all.

Spite of her disappointment in losing Lindenwald, whom she had loved as her superficial nature was capable of, the wound was healed before Miss Livingstone left Newport, in the shape of a salve applied by a wealthy and titled European count, who surrendered to her queenly charms, and proffered to crown her regal head with a coronet. It is almost needless to add that Miss Florence Livingstone did not refuse; and to-day the quandom belle of the old Trimountain City shines in a foreign court as a Countess, and costlier jewels than pearls gleam from the rich folds of her banded hair.

Bella Vernon also "met her fate" at Newport

in the person of a devoted lover, who bore her to a happy and elegant home in the brilliant city of Gotham, where she, too, shines the queen of gayety and fashion.

But, amid all the throng gathered there at that resort "beside the sounding sea," none were happier than the young artist and his gentle and lovely bride; none were destined to walk through life with a closer union of mind and heart than the judge's daughter, sweet Ritie Stuart, and him who had once—the ragged little newsboy—become the recipient of her father's bounty, the now talented and honored man and artist, Lindenwald.

## MR. WASHINGTON'S STRAWBERRIES.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

I HAD literally played out the end of fashionable life.

I had flirted a couple of months at Newport; ruralized through the sultry noons of August at Niagara; passed several weeks at Saratoga; and been two winters in New York "best society." And now, at the age of twenty, I was heartily *ennuied*.

If I had been blest with relatives it would have been different, but I had neither kith nor kin in the wide world, except some English cousins on the other side of the water. My father had died five years previously; and my mother's eyes had seen death at the hour of my birth. Therefore, was I alone in the land.

Wealth in large abundance was mine—wealth of stocks, houses, and real estate, but I do not think I was entirely content. I had friends by the score, but they were summer butterflies, and flattered me because I was the rich and beautiful Isabel Richmond—not because they esteemed and loved me.

If I might credit the assertions of my moustached admirers, I was a *rara avis* among women. I think, myself, that I was by no means as pretty as one might be, and yet not nearly as ugly as some persons whom I have seen.

In this, my twentieth summer, I took a new freak into my head. It was nothing more nor less than the determination to spend one season, at least, in quiet. There was a cottage *ornee*, situated several miles up the Hudson, for sale, and my mind was fixed on purchasing and fitting up that cottage for a country seat. My guardian, a clever old gentleman, and my dead father's best friend, had always indulged me in everything reasonable, and perhaps in some things unreasonable; for I was a little notional and erratic in my ideas.

At the first mention of my new project, he opened wide his eyes, and removed his spectacles to wipe away the imaginary moisture of astonishment. But I persevered; I called him "dear Mr. Gray"—and wondered what I should have done without his nice counsel; got out my embroidered handkerchief, and said some very sentimental things, which completely melted the nice old gentleman, and after that I had it all my own way.

On the following week, I had the title deeds of Sprucewood in my possession; and I was as busy as a bee selecting carpets, and furniture, for my little rural Eden. The very first day of June saw me domiciled at Sprucewood. Mrs. Johns, my faithful old housekeeper, went with me, and three of the servants, besides Rose, my own maid.

It was delightful at the cottage. So I continued to think for five whole days—while the excitement of looping up curtains and arranging the furniture lasted—and then time began to hang heavily on my hands. I wondered what I should do next. I knew nobody in the vicinity; nobody knew me. I had no one to talk to, except Mrs. Johns, or Rose; and my good housekeeper's conversation hinged on the best method of preparing currant jelly; and poor Rosy's whole stock of ideas related to the weather and the fashions.

I tried to read, but everything was insipid, and I wondered what people wrote such silly stuff for. I wouldn't confess that I was homesick; it was no such thing! homesick for the dust and smoke of New York! Humph!

But I was very lonesome. I would have given anybody a warm welcome to Sprucewood—even my *quondam* shadow, Adolph Merriam, who in the city was my *bete noir*, would have been graciously received. Poor Adolph had offered me his white hand, and ample fortune, six several times, and I could have listened to declaration No. 7 at this desolate epoch of my life, without losing my patience.

My neighbors were few and far between; but there was one residence—or princely affair of white stone—not more than the eighth of a mile from Sprucewood. I admired its situation exceedingly—it was on a bold bluff overhanging the river, and back of the mansion stretched a luxuriant forest of stately evergreens. There were wide, shady piazzas upheld by snowy pillars, which were twined by the sturdy creepers of the prairie rose—now in the full glory of crimson bloom—and the extensive grounds were well kept, and planted with choice fruit trees.

Insensibly, I fell to watching the movements of the people at the White Grange, and frequently I saw the handsome carriage, with its

splendid pair of grays, driven up the long avenue to take the proprietor of all this grandeur out for an airing.

My curiosity was awakened, and a woman with her curiosity active is not likely to get very "blue." I soon learned the name of the gentleman at the Grange; and ere long I recognized him in the tall, dignified personage that walked past Sprucewood occasionally of pleasant mornings. That walked past without once lifting his eyes to the window, where I trifled away the time with my embroidery! Guy Washington was, undeniably, a handsome man. He had both grace and dignity of carriage—though the balance on the side of dignity was rather the heavier. I watched for him morning after morning, and every time that I saw his tall form glide by, the strange desire seized me to know how Mr. Washington would look "off his dignity"—if indeed he ever left the regal pedestal.

I wished, most devoutly, that he would trip his foot against a stone; or that the saucy wind would bear away his hat; or a snarling dog would give him a gratuitous serenade: in short, that anything might happen which would place this haughty Mr. Guy Washington in a ridiculous position.

I have told you that I was notional, and this was one of my notions.

From indulgence, this desire became irresistible. I could hardly sleep for insatiate longing to see this proud, handsome fellow reduced to the vulgarities of other men—carrying bundles, scolding office boys, and getting knocked into the gutter by passing omnibusses. But as if defying the common fate, Mr. Washington walked by every morning erect and dignified as ever.

Even a rapid shower failed to disconcert him. I saw him exposed to a perfect tempest of wind and rain; and I here assert that his linen coat and pants, so far from clinging to him like those of other men, when wetted, stood out glossy, elastic, and firm, as though nothing had happened!

Still I did not relinquish the faint hope which I had that something would turn up to satisfy my desire. And fortune favored me, as she ever does the brave and undespairing.

My gardener had occasionally employed a smart, mischievous little Irish lad, named Patrick Neale, to assist in the garden; and walking one day among my flower beds, I espied Patrick at work with his spade. I began a conversation with him, praising his diligence, and wondering why he did not apply to Mr. Washington for a permanent situation. I said this just to get the

boy's opinion of my neighbor. Pat was indignant at the question, and directly proceeded to inform, in his rich Celtic brogue, that he and Mr. Washington had "fell out." It happened in this wise:

Mr. Washington particularly prided himself on his fine fruits and shrubbery. A little distance from the Grange was a valuable clover field, now in full blossom, and this same field was noted for the delicious strawberries which were hidden in the grass. Mr. Washington had never prohibited any one from gathering as many of the berries as they chose, though by his generosity he generally had his crop of hay ruined for the season. A week previously, Pat had gone to the field with his tin pail, and secured the best of the fruit for the nearest market. Mr. Washington had come that way while the lad was thus engaged, and had offered no objection to his proceedings, but had cautioned him against getting over the fence into the bed of fine berries which he had cultivated with great care and expense. But we all know that forbidden fruit is sweet, and Pat could not withstand the temptation which seized him to tickle his palate with some of the famous "seedlings." So seizing his opportunity while Mr. Washington had gone to ride, he scaled the paling, and commenced filling his pail with the fine fruit. The owner returned home before Pat had calculated he would, and, consequently, poor Pat was caught in the pilfering operation. Mr. Washington suffered him to depart unmolested; but he had abused his confidence, the gentleman said, and he could never trust him again. If he found him, after that, in his field, he should certainly force him to leave; and straightway he posted up a notice on the gate, forbidding all persons from gathering strawberries on his premises, under penalty of the law provided for such offenders!

Instantly a scheme was formed in my fertile brain.

"Pat!" I said, quickly, "lend me your jacket and hat for a couple of hours, and I will pay you well for the inconvenience of going bareheaded. And take this an evidence of my good intention"—I tossed him a bright silver dollar. His dull eyes flew wide open with astonishment.

"Never mind, Pat," said I, "it's all right—and keep it whist! mind you."

The hat and jacket were delivered over to me without a word of comment, and I ran up to my chamber particularly elated.

Forbidden to gather strawberries in Mr. Washington's field under the penalty of the law, indeed! We'd see!

I arrayed myself in the bright blue jacket, and tucked my curls away under the tattered straw hat, and, having secured a basket, I left the cottage by a side door, and proceeded across the lots to Mr. Washington's clover field. I knew that the proprietor of the Grange was at home, for I had just seen him ride up the avenue on his black hunter.

And I should be mistaken for Pat, and the dignified gentleman would come forth to drive me from the field, and I should have the satisfaction of seeing him in a rage, and off his good behavior. I was fairly jubilant over the idea.

Creeping cautiously along behind fences, that my feminine skirts might be concealed, I, at length, reached the field, and, climbing the fence, I stood upon the prohibited territory. I made my way into the midst of the tall grass—shivering all the time for fear there were snakes there—and then kneeling down, I commenced gathering the crimson fruit with a will. I was in full view of the windows of the Grange, and should not, probably, remain there long without being discovered.

Absorbed in my congenial occupation, I half forgot the object for which I had come, until I heard a deep musical voice calling out at a little distance,

"Patrick! Patrick! quit the field, my lad! You know my orders!"

I gave my head a little defiant Irish bob, and never budged an inch. Very soon I heard the grass rustling by my side, and, glancing out of the corner of my eye, I saw Mr. Washington coming up at a quick trot, with a willow twig in his hand.

"Patrick," he pursued, "I am exceedingly sorry that you should prove yourself so hardened, so disobedient! exceedingly sorry!" and he testified his regret by touching the supposed Patrick very lightly on the shoulder with the willow twig. Whether this action was intended or accidental, I do not know, but I sprang to my feet and confronted him. The wind, at that

moment, came in an impudent puff and took my borrowed hat off—and there I stood, confused, with my curls tossing in rude disorder over my face. And if I wasn't satisfied with Mr. Washington's expression of amazement, then I was, certainly, the most exacting of women! He blushed, stammered, and broke down at every third word.

"Really, Miss, or madam—I—I—that is, I beg pardon——"

"I drew myself up haughtily. "I regret having put you to so much trouble, sir," I said, in a frigid voice; "I will leave your possessions immediately! These are your strawberries, and the basket also, which you will please accept for your politeness. I wish you a very good morning."

"Pray, keep the berries, I entreat! Remain here as long as you wish—I was mistaken—utterly mistaken! I thought——"

What Mr. Washington thought is lost to posterity, for I could contain my risibilities no longer in the face of that forlorn-looking gentleman; and, turning quickly, I sped for the fence, which I climbed with haste, and made the best of my way to Sprucewood.

The next morning, at as early an hour as was etiquette, Mr. Guy Washington called to apologize. He called and called again, and, in fact, became a constant visitor at Sprucewood. I never confided to him my reason for invading his strawberry field, however, until the evening that I promised to be his wife. Then, with his arm around me, and his clear eyes looking into mine, he said,

"And now, dear Isabel, why *did* you assume that disguise and steal my strawberries?"

"Guy," I replied, frankly, "I could not help it! I had watched your dignified lordship for some days—and I did so want to see you do something that would destroy your everlasting dignity! Indeed I could not help it, Guy!"

And—would you believe it? Mr. Washington a second time did a very unbecoming thing—he kissed me!

## OUR ORGAN.

BY ELLA RODMAN.

WE were very poor. All Saints' Church was situated in a suburban village, and its nearness to a great city had taken off many wealthy parishioners, who loved to roll in to church in their carriages, and worship in some gorgeous temple, where the choir was presided over by a fashionable prima donna.

Our little church was pretty and rural-looking; it had originally been built upon a very small scale, and had additions made from time to time as affairs prospered with the parish—so that it was quite a standing joke among outsiders that the condition of the treasury was to be ascertained by a glance at the church edifice, if money was rather easy, a new wing was sure to be under way. But we did not care, we loved every stone in the irregular building, for we had all helped to place them there; and we had plenty of ground, and flowering vines that mingled with the ivy on the brown walls, and gave it a beautifully picturesque appearance.

We were old-fashioned people, too, and did not believe in new-fangled ways; and dear old Dr. Rubric had as great a horror of modern innovations as most people have of rattlesnakes. The good man *was* rather absent-minded, sometimes, but we were used to his ways and got on admirably together. He never made much of a figure at conventions, and never enjoyed the *clat* of newspaper controversy, but was content to stay at home and fulfill the duties of his parish.

What he would have been, though, without Mrs. Rubric it is impossible to tell, and painful to contemplate; for that excellent woman was the doctor's right-hand man, and, being continually on the alert, she managed to keep him straight. Dr. Rubric was not young, but Mrs. Rubric defied all surmises on the subject of age. "The oldest inhabitants" said that she had looked just so ever since she came to All Saints' parish; and she was a remarkably active little woman, whose chief characteristic was a peculiarly wide-awake expression, that contrasted so strongly with the doctor's dreamy look as to be almost ridiculous.

But if ever woman had need to keep her wits about her, that woman was Mrs. Rubric during the whole period of her married life. The

doctor's turn of mind was meditative and argumentative; and he looked as though he was always solving some internal problem.

Not unfrequently, during the reading of the prayers, or, in the course of the sermon, there would come an awful pause; and, to those unaccustomed to it, the suspense was painful, for strangers were very apt to fancy that the doctor would not be able to go on again. But, after awhile, he would awake with a start, and proceed as though no such break had occurred.

Notices suffered dreadfully in Dr. Rubric's hands; he made all sorts of mistakes in reading them, and generally gave the wrong time at which anything was to take place. Mrs. Rubric, who sat close to the chancel, corrected him with frowns, and words, and whispers; and once she was heard audibly to say, "Three o'clock," when the doctor was likely to make considerable trouble by insisting on half-past three. A wag had declared that Dr. Rubric once baptized a child in the name of "the world, the flesh, and the devil," but this was mere outside slander, which should not be listened to for a moment.

These were the doctor's failings; but who could estimate the self-denials, the watchings, the fastings, the loving-kindness, and forbearance with which he inlaid his daily life? Of the little that he received, and it was a very small salary, with a large family to support upon it, much, very much went to the poor and needy; and he never complained that his means were insufficient.

The doctor's sermons might have been more *interesting*; but their orthodoxy was sound, and only those who listened in a merely critical spirit could fail to obtain benefit from them. But there are restless people everywhere; and once it was delicately insinuated to Dr. Rubric that a little variety would be an agreeable thing; if the pulpit, for instance, should be now and then filled with different preachers, his people might be able to appreciate *him* better. To which Dr. Rubric mildly replied that he did not wish his people to appreciate him better, as it was not his desire to preach *himself*; but he promised to comply with the request which had been insinuated.



On the very next Sunday, they had a change, and such a change! Dr. Rubric had sent for the son of an old friend of his, the Rev. Nehemiah Newboy; who, although young in years, was a giant in form, and considered himself equal to any undertaking. This gentleman was particularly interested in the subject of reform, and rarely visited any country parish, whose members were humbly walking in the good old paths, without disturbing their serenity before he left.

Dr. Rubric's spare figure scarcely filled the snowy surplice, but the massive proportions of the young deacon puffed it out to an unheard-of extent; and he strode into the chancel with a quick step, and an air that seemed to say that he was not to be trifled with. He *dispatched* the service, for that is the only appropriate term, at a rate that left the congregation almost breathless in their efforts to keep up with him—slammed the vestry door after him—rushed into his black gown—and then, as if he had been wasting much precious time, he ascended into the pulpit, and began as though he was now going to work in good earnest.

He shouted out his text, "Awake, thou that sleepest," in a manner that startled the congregation in general, and almost overwhelmed two or three hard-working, old creatures, who, arraigned at the tribunal of conscience, pleaded guilty to a few surreptitious winks, indulged in while Dr. Rubric was toiling to prove to them the truth of principles which they had held from childhood.

It was truly a thundering discourse which fell from the lips of the Rev. Nehemiah Newboy, and accompanied by appropriate violence of gesture. He spoke familiarly of "John" and "Peter," and elegantly observed of the great Apostle, that "he was scared by a waiting-maid." The copy of the Holy Scriptures which reposed upon the velvet cushion, had never met with such irreverent treatment before; and if the parish of All Saints had been satisfied with such qualifications as those of the Scottish preacher who wore out several Bibles, and beat the pulpit cushion to rags, the Rev. Mr. Newboy would have received an unanimous call thither.

During all this excitement, Dr. Rubric sat, perfectly unmoved, in the chancel—his eyes wearing the far-off, dreamy expression that usually characterized them, and his thoughts probably engaged upon some knotty point in theology that was to form the basis of a future sermon. He took no part whatever in the services, but left the field to Mr. Newboy; and

many eyes gazed wistfully at him, the owners thereof wondering that they could ever have wanted a change.

It is scarcely necessary to say that when Mr. Newboy vanished from the scene, it was forever.

It was a bright morning in autumn, and I sat in Mrs. Rubric's parlor, awaiting the appearance of that lady, and the arrival of other womenkind, who were coming to work for the parish school. This institution at present consisted of a little boy who had been run over by an omnibus, which operation had by no means crushed the hereditary evil out of him—a young lady, sister to the aforesaid, who was afflicted with a propensity to appropriate the property of others, and who gave considerable trouble in consequence—two or three other boys whose decent conduct rendered them quite obscure—and several little dumplings of girls. In order in some way to remunerate the parents of this interesting progeny, for permitting them to come to school, we were obliged to keep them in clothes; and we assembled once a week to work for this purpose.

But another and more exciting subject was to occupy our thoughts this morning, and that was the raising of an organ for All Saints' Church. This work had been commenced chiefly through the spirit and energy of May Lovel and her mother. It was always "May Lovel and her mother," instead of "Mrs. Lovel and May"—for the daughter, who was the belle and beauty of the parish, was one of those active spirits who are always foremost either for good or evil; while gentle Mrs. Lovel, although she did more work than any half dozen women in the parish, loved to keep in the background. May, too, kept her good deeds in the background; but she could not keep her own pretty self, for she was the universal pet and favorite.

It had long been a crying shame that All Saints' Church had no organ. The usual quarrels of the choir had been aggravated by the vain attempt to draw impressive sounds from an infirm melodeon; and it was at last seriously resolved to take the matter in hand. All the church people were interested in it; but organs cost money, and there was not much wealth among us. Several hundred dollars would be required, and how was this to be raised?

This question had been vigorously discussed at the last "Dorcas," and it was then determined to see what we could do. I felt somewhat like an alien, having only recently risen to the honor of being a parishioner of Dr. Rubric's; and I was exceedingly anxious to distinguish myself in this good work.

While awaiting the other arrivals, I took a survey of the rectory parlor; and the first thing that I noticed was an immense number of portraits, engravings, and daguerreotypes. As these all had a clerical appearance, I concluded to take a closer survey in the hope of being made familiar with the features of all the prominent clergy of the state.

The first portrait was that of a very young man, in a surplice and spectacles—the features and expression were evidently those of Dr. Rubric at an early age, probably before he had become accustomed to the surplice, or thought that he could possibly have his portrait taken without it. A little farther on, was a face in water colors, probably the performance of some accomplished female of the family; and, somewhat to my surprise, the features of Dr. Rubric again beamed upon me. I turned to a daguerreotype—his reverence looked forth stern and dignified, and I flew for refuge to another portrait; but it was Dr. Rubric at a more advanced stage, and my eyes were weary.

It was a relief to rest them upon the faces of a fair, smiling lady, of middle-age, who looked pleased at having her portrait taken—and a dark, scowling man, companion to the above, who seemed uncomfortable in the position in which he was placed, and out of sorts with himself and every one else. Whether these two opposite individuals were the maternal and paternal relatives of Dr. or Mrs. Rubric, I could not tell; but they certainly belonged to one or the other, or they would not have been there.

Then came Dr. Rubric again, with his hand on his chair, instead of his cheek, by way of variety; and then a magnificent bishop, in full regalia, who looked as though he must have been, in his day, a perfect sledge-hammer to those who scouted the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession.

My eyes were resting upon Dr. Rubric in the act of writing a sermon, when the door opened, and Mrs. Rubric entered, carrying a baby, a basket the size of an ordinary clothes-basket, and filled with heterogenous articles of domestic manufacture, a large account-book, and ink-stand, and various implements for sewing. I never saw such a human baggage-wagon before, and the number of articles transported at once by that one little woman was perfectly marvelous. The baby, who was all eyes, gave forth no sound whatever; and the basket being emptied for its accommodation, it was unceremoniously deposited therein, and took the arrangement as a matter of course.

The ladies now began to arrive; and there

immediately ensued such a clatter of tongues, that it was equal to finding a four-leaved clover to discover any listener in the party. Finally, Mrs. Rubric knocked on the table with a pencil-case, and prepared to make a speech. The pile of articles before her, which had been emptied out of the basket, consisted of pin-cushions, pen-wipers, sachets, cravats, and various other things that are generally unsaleable; and observing that these were all contributions from the ladies of the parish, she proceeded to say, that, although faultless as to execution, they appeared to her rather an insecure foundation for the organ, and something practical would doubtless receive more favor in the market. Mrs. Rubric was eminently "practical," and it would not have surprised us had she proposed the manufacture of brown soap, or calico gowns, as a sensible substitute for the staple articles of fancy fairs.

"The doctor does not approve of fairs," continued Mrs. Rubric, "nor did he at all enter into the spirit of a bag, which I proposed, to contain a variety of articles, none under the value of two shillings, and every person, who paid two shillings, to have a chance at the bag."

"Fancy fairs!" muttered Miss Breadcombe, who generally made a running commentary on whatever was said, "no more do I approve of them—'fancy man-traps' they had better be called! Only a few evenings ago, was I inveigled to a 'fair' by that goose, Sam—although he is my brother, he's as foolish as most men—and recovering a little from the blaze of light, and the chattering and confusion around, the first person that I spied was my old friend, Susan Armet, presiding at a table with a great deal of dignity and propriety—so different from the flippant chits at the other tables!—and right before her was a perfectly-dressed Quakeress, that you could use as a pin-cushion. Now, I had made up mind that, if Sam *would* spend his money, he should spend it sensibly, and he really needed the Quaker woman on his bureau; but when I whispered to him to buy it, he read me quite a lecture upon the folly of wasting a whole dollar on a pin-cushion, and talked so sensibly that I felt quite comforted to think he would depart pocket whole. I stopped to speak to Susan, for I thought she looked a little hurt that Sam did not patronize her table—but when I turned to introduce Sam, he had disappeared. The next glimpse that I caught of him, he was being chattered at by one of the prettiest girls and greatest flirts in the room, who shook her curls and rolled up her eyes at him, until I could have boxed her ears with a right good

will—especially as I saw that she was making him pay well for the privilege of approaching her. Now, Sam is no chicken—his first gray hair has been succeeded by a numerous family—and when I saw him deliberately laying down his money, and receiving a handful of trash in exchange, I said to myself, ‘Samuel Breadcombe, you are an old fool! and fancy fairs are a swindling institution!’ What do you suppose this precious brother of mine had to show for a five dollar bill? A negro doll—(I only wish the abolitionists had run away with it before *he* got hold of it!) a raisin with eight cloves stuck in it, which that minx called ‘a turtle,’ and charged him half a dollar for it—and a ridiculous baby’s shoe, which she declared was a nice pin-cushion! Don’t talk to me of ‘fancy fairs!’”

Now, no one *was* talking to Miss Breadcombe of fancy fairs; but while Mrs. Rubric was holding forth, she said all this, in an undertone, to May Lovel, who happened to be next to her.

Mrs. Rubric thought that the ladies had better manufacture various articles of daily use, and endeavor to dispose of them.

“For instance,” she continued, producing two neat little jars, “here is some genuine ox-marrow which I have just manufactured, myself, and as most of our friends use pomatum, I apprehend very little difficulty in disposing of it. We may realize quite a sum, toward the organ, by the sale of this article.”

Here I spoke up; for, having before me the glossy tresses of many of my fair friends, not to speak of the well-oiled locks of their husbands and brothers, I boldly ordered a dozen jars of the pomatum; and so sanguine was I as to the result, that I saw in imagination a stately organ erected upon a foundation of grease. I longed to be at work dispensing my jars, and receiving the money for them, there would be something so exciting in it; but there was other business to be attended to first.

One of the ladies professed her readiness to engage in the manufacture of indelible ink, a branch of art in which she was considered to excel, and every one was quite sure that people could not possibly exist without indelible ink; another suggested infants’ socks, which was also received with much applause, for little feet were continually turning into the path of life, and those little feet would just as surely need covering.

We all had wealthy friends in town, for whose comfort we became suddenly considerate; and I determined that until the organ was accomplished, none of mine should ever want for pomatum.

May Lovel was in close confab with Miss Breadcombe, at whom, I am sorry to say, she very often laughed. This respectable lady was one of the pillars of the church; and although she had not a great deal to give, herself, she contrived to get considerable out of others. She could not possibly be quiet, except when she would outrage all established rules of decency by talking; and even in church, she often looked as though she longed to break in upon Dr. Rubric.

Her discourse was not always quite connected, so anxious was she to talk as much as possible in the shortest given space of time; and she was now saying to May, “Did I not see you, last Sunday, sitting in a black bonnet on the other side of the church?”

“I never sat in a black bonnet in my life,” replied May, quite gravely.

Miss Breadcombe looked puzzled for a moment, but she could not afford to waste her time; so, leaving the black bonnet, she remarked, with much animation, “I wish that I could get my cousin Edgeworth to help us—*his* help would be worth having!”

“Why do you not go to him, then,” said May, who believed in straightforward measures, “and ask him for a subscription?”

“What!” exclaimed Miss Breadcombe, “go to a man who has just built a church?”

May was awed. She had the greatest admiration for people who built churches, and ventured to suggest that Mr. Edgeworth must be a very interesting character.

“He was,” replied Miss Breadcombe, “before he lost his front teeth, but that has made a great change in him.”

May should think it would; and, reserving her enthusiasm for another occasion, she turned aside to conceal her laughter.

The next moment, Miss Breadcombe was eagerly discussing the manufacture of some surplices that were to be sent among the Lwalla Indians; and it was *her* opinion that every button, which fastened the clerical garments, should be marked with a cross in French working cotton, and otherwise arranged in a manner calculated to be impressive to Indians.

Having finished the interesting garment of lead-colored Canton flannel upon which I had been engaged, my conscience would now allow me to leave the meeting, and begin the exciting business to which I had been looking forward. I carried off the dozen jars of pomatum, thinking it a pity that I could not accommodate fifty, as anything so universally used would be seized upon with eagerness; and, full of hope, I started on my rounds.

Those friends upon whose glossy heads was written "pomatum," in characters not to be mistaken, received the preference; and those who were known to be possessed of golden charms also rose in the scale. Mrs. Wigham White had both recommendations; and at her imposing residence I made the first stop.

"She was so sorry," when I mentioned the pomatum business, and I made it *apropos* to very discordant subjects, "so very sorry, but she had just supplied herself with pomatum enough to last a year."

The idea of taking an extra jar or two, merely to contribute to the organ fund, did not seem to occur to her; but when I modestly made the suggestion, she received it with a burst of laughter.

"I wish that you could see my drawer of curiosities!" said she, "things that I have bought for no earthly object but to help some society, or poor person—the sight would appal you! I shall never have any use for them, and I really do not feel disposed to add to the stock."

She said all this very pleasantly, dwelling at some length upon the annoyances of this kind, to which people who were supposed to be rich were subjected; and I left her in a fit of virtuous indignation.

I next tried a fashionable lady, whose locks were fairly saturated with some greasy substance, but she smilingly assured me that "she never used pomatum." I found some comfort in cherishing the idea that she patronized candle ends; but this did not sell the pomatum.

Then I attempted a young dandy, whom I encountered in my rounds; but he was perfectly devoted to "Pewick's Coralicum," an oily compound, whose virtues were blazoned forth on every spare fence and post in town and country. Mentally anathematizing this quack preparation as the enemy of our organ, I returned home perfectly disgusted with the discovery that a more perverse set of creatures than one's friends and acquaintances, when one has any loaves to dispose of, cannot possibly be imagined.

I arranged the jars on a mantle, and charged every one to let me know of any fellow creature who was pomatum-ly inclined. My first customer speedily appeared—the very last person whom I should have expected.

Biddy, the cook, put her head in at the door with the announcement, that "as she haird that I had grase to sell that made thp hair look mighty nate, sho'd like to take some, if I plazed, mum." Biddy examined the jars with the eye of a connoisseur, approved of the gilding,

and the picture of an ox on the outside, and evidently influenced by these external considerations, she laid down the money with an independent air, and walked off with a couple of pomatum jars in her hands. I trusted that Biddy would be restrained by prudential considerations from using her newly-acquired property in the cooking.

The next day I tried again; and a dear old lady, who probably had no sort of use for it, took two more jars of the pomatum. I feared to mention indelible ink, lest people should hazard their souls by assuring me that they never marked their clothes.

I encountered Miss Breadcombe employed upon the same errand. She was flushed with success and full of triumph; somehow, people didn't dare to refuse *her*, and she had gotten rid of innumerable jars of pomatum, indelible ink by the wholesale, and pen-wipers, &c., *ad infinitum*. Her purse was well filled with cash for the organ; and I rejoiced that there was *one* resolute spirit among us to make these provoking people empty their pockets.

"She never minded their telling her they didn't want things," she said, "she just told *them* that nobody cared a straw whether they wanted things or not—the church wanted money, and they had got to give *so* much—if they chose to take her articles in exchange, well and good—if not, there would be more left to sell to others. People always concluded that they *did* want them, when they found that they had to pay the money, whether they took them or not—and treading on egg-shells was no way to go about a business like that."

I supposed that this was intended as a reproach for me; but I received it with meekness, for I never could hope to emulate Miss Breadcombe's highwayman-like manner.

Scarcely had I left her, when I encountered May Lovel, who had a tired, discouraged look that quite touched one's heart.

"It is of no use," said she, mournfully, "I may as well give up trying—people are so accustomed to seeing mother and me come in with our pockets full of trash to dispose of, for some institution or other, that they listen to our stories perfectly unmoved."

In spite of this unpromising account, I had a prophetic feeling that May Lovel, either directly or indirectly, would be the principal means of procuring the organ, and I told her so; but she shook her head sadly, and went on her way.

The fund swelled to fifty dollars, which was put out at interest, and we began to talk loftily

of "the treasury." Another fifty followed, and another, and then we despaired of nothing.

Lent was upon us; and few superfluous luxuries were consumed in the parish that season. Several thrifty housewives made the discovery that beans were very nourishing; but they were generally informed by their lords and masters that they did not desire to be nourished—especially that portion of them who felt no particular interest in the organ.

Mrs. Lovel's means were limited, but she had very refined tastes, and contrived to give to the cottage home over which she presided a most attractive air of comfort. The house had a different look from the homes around; it stood farther back from the road, and had more shrubbery and vines about it; and, although not so grand-looking as many of its neighbors, it was usually noticed and admired by strangers.

May and her mother had a long walk to church, and, during this Lent, they looked more exhausted than usual. Just before Easter, Mrs. Lovel sent in a donation of fifty dollars toward the organ, and none of us knew exactly how it was obtained; although it was generally understood that Mrs. Lovel's means were very disproportioned to her charities. May had no Easter bonnet, this year; but this prolific subject was speedily swallowed up in wondering admiration of the Easter flowers.

Where did they come from? Who had given them? Nothing like them had ever been seen in the parish before, and their delicious fragrance filled the whole church. Miss Breadcombe did not rest until she had thoroughly sifted the whole matter, and chiefly to her exertions were we indebted for the information that was obtained.

A gentleman of very striking appearance had been seen at All Saints' Church for several Sundays in succession, a stranger to every one in the parish; but all had noticed him, and found various surmises as to the reason of his coming. He had been pointed out to Dr. Rubric, who looked benignly upon him as a person of much discernment, who had been attracted there by his (the doctor's) eloquence—he had been inwardly appropriated by Miss Breadcombe as a wealthy enthusiast, who had, doubtless, heard of the many alms-deeds which *she* had done, and the wonderful things she had accomplished in the parish, and had come hither to help her—he had been rejoiced over by the vestrymen as an acquisition in the way of pew-rent—and it had been generally determined to waylay and welcome him to the parish, when lo and behold!

it was discovered that he was the donor of the Easter flowers.

On the very next Sunday after this discovery, the stranger was seen to add a bill of almost fabulous amount to the collection that was taken up for the organ. As I said before, we were poor; and such a prize as this must be secured without loss of time. He was surrounded and detained, as, quite unconscious of the sensation he had created, he was peacefully leaving the church after service; and so many hands were put out all at once for him to shake, that he did not seem to know which to take, nor why he should take any.

The ladies speedily made the discovery that he was the handsomest man they had ever seen, and that he was about thirty-five years old. He was very tall and large, had a piercing eye, and a ruddy English complexion. His name was Norval, Clarence Norval; and Miss Breadcombe, who was apt to get things twisted, reported him to be afflicted with the cognomen of "Grampian Hills." He was generally thanked for the disinterestedness which had brought him to All Saints' parish, (for he had, doubtless, come because he knew it to be in need of aid,) and even Dr. Rubric, himself, by dint of being prompted and called to order by Mrs. Rubric, delivered a speech to the same effect.

Mr. Norval turned a deeper color than ever, and was visibly embarrassed; but his eyes were evidently wandering elsewhere, and extricating himself from his admirers as speedily as possible, he walked rapidly off.

May and her mother, who had not remained to pay adulation to the stranger, were just entering their cottage gate as Mr. Norval approached, and it appeared to me that he looked after them with considerable interest.

The new parishioner was called upon by the church dignitaries, and welcomed, and complimented; and after acquainting himself with the state of affairs, he very liberally supplied what was lacking of the requisite sum for the organ. The parish went into ecstasies over this generosity; but such is the fickleness of human nature, that, before long, they began to doubt Mr. Norval's disinterestedness.

It was very plain that neither Dr. Rubric's eloquence, nor Miss Breadcombe's fame, nor even the necessities of the parish, had drawn him hither—but simply the sweet face of May Lovel. She had passed disconsolately from the door of a fashionable acquaintance, on that day when we met in the city, just as Mr. Norval was going in; and he obtained all desired information respecting her during his visit.

"It must be May Lovel," replied the lady to whom he described her, "she is always abroad on some Quixotic expedition, and she was in here, just now, trying to sell me a lot of trash to get an organ, I believe, or something of the kind. As to her residence, I had better give you the direction of All Saints' Church, for she spends most of her time there."

This was uttered with a light laugh, for the lady who gave this account of May was not pleased at the idea of his being so impressed; but it had quite a different effect from what she intended. Mr. Norval had wealth and leisure, was a good Churchman, and quite willing to attend our little rural place of worship for the chance of becoming acquainted with May Lovel.

May was very much surprised when she heard all this; and she did not become Mrs. Norval without careful inquiries on the part of the mother, who was called upon to give up an only child; but every investigation redounded so much to Mr. Norval's credit, that no objection could possibly be urged.

Miss Breadcombe seemed rather disappointed at the turn which affairs had taken, for, after all, *she* had not procured the organ; but, as I prophesied, May Lovel had been the real means of bringing it about. But those whose faith and self-denial had gathered together the *first* little shining heap were not forgotten; and sweet to them were the strains that ascended, with lofty words of praise, on the day when first we heard OUR ORGAN.

## A BARBER-OUS EXPERIENCE.

BY KATE VAN TASSELL.

You know, Mr. Peterson, what a rage all the girls have had for cutting off their hair. Well, would you believe it? I actually took the infection, and had all my "glorious curls" cut off "at one fell swoop." You can't divine the reason, of course; and, what is more, you can't divine the consequences. Such a pickle as it brought me into! But that is just what I'm going to tell you about.

You must know I'm a homely, pug-nosed little imp, without one single attraction, except a saucy tongue, (?) and—six months ago—a semi-circular sweep of heavy, black curls, "raven," my devoted admirers used to call them; and I declare to gracious, I've had more verses of Byron, Moore, Keats, Shelley, Coleridge, and even Shakspeare, quoted at me, on account of those same curls, than would fill two ordinary common-place books: to say nothing of the thousand and one "original" scribblings leveled at my devoted head. This last was the climax of injuries. Selections, if they are in good taste—which, I am sorry to say, mine seldom were—I can abide; indeed they are rather convenient, as they can be used a second time when one wants to seem literary; but, of *all* bores, deliver me from the "original" scribblings of an addle-brained man of fashion. I have a way of turning things to account, and have laughed off many a fit of vapors over those unfortunate poems.

As spring came on, however, I began, as usual, to find my curls burdensome, and tried at first to confine them with a comb, or a net, but combs were constantly falling out, to my vexation and dismay, and nets broke, besides being almost as uncomfortable, in the way of heat, as the curls.

At last, one warm evening, that insipid fop, Frank Vincent, began in his usual strain,

"Ah! Mith Kate, if you but knew the anguish I thuffer for one of thethe bewitching curlth, you couldn't refuthe me, I am thure."

"My dear fellow," said I, "I beg you'll console yourself, you shall have a half-bushel of them to-morrow."

He rolled up the whites of his eyes at me in the most distressing manner, and declared that I was "thuch a madoap."

However, a sudden resolve flashed upon my mind, and I determined—regarding him as the representative man of my "dear five hundred" masculines—to be as good as my word.

That night I sat before the mirror in my wrapper, and my faithful Lucy, with many protestations and shruggings of the shoulders, yielded to my commands, and severed all the "fatal" curls. The next morning I rose, and, looking in the mirror, beheld myself shorn of all my charms.

With that sight came remorse. "Lucy," I said, "this will never do, I'm as ugly as a hobgoblin. Bring me my breakfast, and then go straight to some hair-dresser's, and find me a set of false curls. I can't annihilate myself for the sake of that Frank Vincent's nonsense, and annihilated I might as well be as to appear in society in this guise. Give orders to admit no one; say I'm sick and can't be seen. I must have leisure to meditate revenge."

Lucy went out, and, after a moment's reflection, I seated myself at my writing-desk, and armed with twenty sheets of prepared note-paper, twenty tiny envelopes, and a stick of sealing-wax, commenced the work of making "overpoweringly happy" twenty different young men. I wrote thus, and copied it upon each sheet of note-paper:

"DEAR —:—(Each blank was filled with the name of one of my most humble adorers.)—I'm going into the country, not to Newport or Saratoga, or any other of those captivating places, but away up to a forlorn old place they call B——, in Vermont. It is the decree of fate, not my own choice. Of course I'm inconsolable, have really not the slightest idea of surviving the summer. I'm too despondent to bid anybody farewell: but I couldn't bear to go without giving *you* a hint of my doom. Enclosed I send, as a souvenir, the gift you have so many times besought. Many have begged vainly for the favor: but I am persuaded *you* are sincere.

KATE."

From the mass of curls, of which I had been so ruthlessly relieved, I singled out twenty soft silken tresses, and enclosed one in each note, folded and directed, and sealed them all. By

that time Lucy had returned with the false curls. They were splendid, not, of course, as heavy as my own, but much lighter and more comfortable, and quite presentable withal. They were arranged on a comb, and by a little art could be made to defy the penetration of the keenest observer.

A week later, found me nicely ensconced in a fine old mansion in B——, where resided my aunt Danforth and her three pretty daughters, Hetty, Helen, and Sophia, as intelligent, and, withal, as sprightly girls as one often sees. I had scarcely been there a day, when the results of my practical joking began to be apparent. Letters came from first one, and then another of my victims, announcing their delight at the reception of my note; and describing, or rather attempting to describe, their intense and overpowering emotions on finding that they, of all others, had been singled out to be the happy recipients of such a favor.

We laughed ourselves nearly into hysteric fits over these letters; and I began to anticipate what the consequences would probably be if ever an *eclaircissement* should arrive. However, my fears on this account were not sufficient to keep me awake nights; and having extracted all the amusement possible from the notes, we set ourselves at work to devise other diversions.

At last somebody proposed private theatricals, on a scale, of course, suited to our limited resources.

"Capital!" said Helen, who was the ruling spirit in all our sports; "and since Kate has short hair, and is so nearly the height of brother Will!"—"brother Will" was away at college—"we can dress her in man's clothes, and she will make a capital hero."

I ought before to have informed the reader, that having become long ago disgusted with my false curls, I had laid them aside, and, in the simplicity of this rural retreat, luxuriated in short hair. It was charming. Helen's proposition met with decided favor, and that very afternoon we went on an exploring expedition to the garret, and exhumed from sundry bales of rubbish, not only a complete suit of man's apparel, in a very good state of preservation, but also an immense and formidable frill beard, which had been fashioned a year or two previous for some tableaux.

"Behold the Bandit of the Appennines!" exclaimed Sophia, as she drew it forth from its hiding-place. "Why, Kate, when you get this on, I shall be positively afraid of you. Oh! isn't it splendid?" she exclaimed, as having

fastened it to my face, she drew back to witness the effect. "What a magnificent Claude Melnotte you will make! I've positively a mind to fall in love with you."

The smooth barn floor was to be the scene of our dramatic representations; and on the following day we were there congregated, myself arrayed very presentably as Claude Melnotte.

Shouts of laughter greeted my appearance upon the stage, and it was nearly fifteen minutes before the *dramatis personæ* had sufficiently regained their composure to be able to proceed.

Madam Deschappelles had just withdrawn, silencing her scruples in regard to propriety with the consoling ejaculation, "But then a *Prince*, you know;" and Claude was just recounting most eloquently to Pauline the beauties of his imaginary home, when the sudden whirl of carriage wheels fell on our ears, and Pauline, *alias* Helen Danforth, exclaimed most irreverently,

"What on earth is that?" and, peeping out at a crack in the barn, continued, "Two young men, as I live, and they've stopped here. City fellows, too. I'll wager, from their style, some of your devoted knights of the ringlet, Kate. I'll venture my engagement ring."

I peeped, and shrieked, "Paul Havens and Tom Warren! Oh! my prophetic soul! What shall I do? They've found me out, and have come for their revenge. I ought not to have hoaxed them, for they are the sharpest fellows in our set, and will be bound to pay me off. What shall I do?"

"What will you do, indeed?" said Hetty; "for here comes Lucy to call us, and you can't get into the house without going directly in front of the parlor windows."

"And my pantaloons! What is to be done?"

"Why," said Helen, "it is the easiest thing in the world, and a good joke, too. Go in with us, just as you are. I'll introduce you as my cousin, Dick Walton, and make some excuse for the absence of the veritable Kate. They won't stay long, of course, and you can keep in a dark corner."

It was not without some hesitation that I suffered myself to be beguiled into this bold manoeuvre, but finally I assented, upon the girls promising to make themselves so agreeable as completely to absorb the attention of the gentlemen. I had little fear of being betrayed, at any rate, for my disguise was complete, and the braid around my mouth changed the intonations of my voice a good deal.

Helen played her part admirably; and, after being introduced, I walked quietly along the



room, while Helen, complaining of the heat, lowered the curtains, and toned down the light to perfect duskiess.

"Cousin Kate will be so sorry not to have seen you," said Helen. "I hope you will call again when she is at home."

"Undoubtedly we shall," said Paul. "We like the place so well, and hear the trout-fishing is so excellent, that we have taken board at the village for a few weeks, and hope to enjoy the society of Miss Kate and her fair cousins very frequently."

I could scarcely repress an exclamation. Indeed, as the conversation deepened in interest, I was two or three times obliged to bite my lips to keep from betraying myself. So great was the restraint that I began, at last, to long for their departure. But the fates were against me. So quickly sped the time that, before we were aware of it, a terrible shower had arisen, and we were compelled by all the laws of hospitality to give shelter to our guests until after dinner.

"What shall I do?" I asked Helen, in a whisper, as we passed into the dining-room. "They will certainly recognize me in that strong light."

"Nonsense!" said Helen. "Talk a little more, put on a few more killing airs, and your own mother wouldn't suspect you. As it is, your very stillness attracts attention. I've seen Havens looking at you keenly, but I don't think he suspects yet."

At that hint I grew desperate. Uncle was absent, and I was obliged to take the head of the table. Dinner passed cheerily enough. Obligated by circumstances to take the lead in conversation, my spirits rose with every fresh occasion, and I grew brilliant in spite of myself. In fact, so perfect was my burlesque of the killing ladies' man, that the girls were obliged to use their napkins constantly to conceal the convulsive movements of their risible muscles.

Dinner over, the ladies retired to their rooms, whither I was about unceremoniously to follow them, when it occurred to me that it might be a breach of propriety under present circumstances, and, with a patronizing air, I conducted the gentlemen to the piazza for a smoke!

Mr. Peterson, imagine my sensations during that lounge on the piazza.

Paul produced his cigar-case, and, unwilling to decline, I *nonchalantly* accepted a cigar. I had experimented with cigarettes before now, but the remembrance of the result did not, in the least, tend to inspire me with confidence. However, I lighted my cigar with a pretty good grace, and endeavored, by keeping up a con-

stant flow of talk, to divert the attention of my companions from my very abortive attempts to smoke it.

"Hang it!" exclaimed Tom Warren, at last; "I'm sorry Kate isn't at home. She is the deuce, but one can't help liking her."

"We shall see enough of her before we leave, I fancy," said Paul, coolly, puffing away at his cigar.

Now, be it known to you that Paul Havens had been my especial liking for at least six weeks before I had left town; and fancy my feelings as I heard him chat thus cavalierly about me. However, it was no time to indulge in indignation.

"I should like to know," said I, "if Kate is a specimen of your New York girls. I think she is a good deal wilder, more untamed, than some of our country-bred damsels."

"I tell you she's the deuce!" said Tom Warren, whose vocabulary was not extensive. "Did you ever hear her tell what a joke she served a dozen of us fellows just before she left town?"

"I've heard her laughing about it amongst the girls," said I, "but I don't know the whole story. How was it?"

Tom gave a highly exaggerated and whimsical account of the affair, adding,

"A good many of the boys felt amazingly set up, till, one day, Frank Vincent, silly fellow! must needs take offence at something one of us said about her, and, with that pompous air of his, declared that, as Miss Kate's *particular friend*, he felt obliged to resent such remarks. Upon that Ed Sarrater denied Frank's claim to the distinction, and offered to bet a supper for the party that he could prove himself the better entitled of the two to that distinction. Frank accepted the bet, and, with an air of triumph, displayed the note and the enclosure. Ed produced its fellow, and then, by George, every man in the crowd exhibited a fac-simile."

"The deuce!" I ejaculated. What is the use in being a man if we can't use big words?

"You'd better believe," said Tom, "that there was some laughing and swearing, and some tall walking among that crowd presently."

"But she'll get her pay," he continued; "I ain't very cute myself, but I know a fellow that will show her a trick worth two of that. I like Kate, but I'll be hanged if I like to see a girl have things *all* her own way. Wait till Count comes, we'll see then who's who. He's coming up here on purpose to take the airs out of her."

All this time Paul hadn't spoken. At last he daintily removed his cigar from his lips, leaned

back his head, and, sending up two or three smoke wreaths, said, lazily,

"I wonder if they were her own curls, or some bought for the occasion?"

"Oh! they were false, of course," I replied. "She wears curls now."

"Well," said Paul, springing up hastily, "we must go, Mr. Walton. I'd thank you to order the horses."

Thankful for my relief, I excused myself, and rushed to my own room, sending Helen down to give the necessary orders, and bid the gentlemen adieu. I dared not shake hands with them lest I might be betrayed, and preferred seeming rude to having a discovery.

The next day they came again, and you may be sure Dick Walton was missing, and Miss Kate on hand for sport.

"Did you have a pleasant ride yesterday?" asked Paul.

"Yes, but I was caught in that terrible shower, and had a very romantic time."

"Indeed!" he replied, demurely. "I hope you experienced no inconvenience from it."

"Well, yes; a little, but nothing serious. I'm none the worse for it to-day."

"By-the-way, Miss Kate," said Tom, "there's a new celebrity in town since you left: a young millionaire from New Orleans. All the girls are dying for him. You lost a great deal by leaving quite so soon."

"Indeed," said I, "it is a pity. Can't you induce him to come up here? It would be splendid if he would join our party. I suppose, though, he will go to Saratoga?"

"Yes, he's been there, and going to Lake George next. By George, I'll write to him and invite him here. I'd like to see you two flirt. He's a match for you, Kate. He's splendid, I tell you. The girls call him the Count, he's so stylish."

I saw Paul looking at me, and, determined to be revenged for the way in which he had permitted me to be talked about yesterday, I said,

"Do bring him here. That would be perfectly charming. Forewarned, forearmed, you know."

I felt a little uneasy, I confess; for these wild fellows have strange acquaintances sometimes; and I was sure, from Tom's tone yesterday, that he was prepared to go any length to be even with me.

Before many days it was announced that "the Count" was really coming. The night before his expected arrival, Paul came to take me out for a drive. It was a charming evening, and I anticipated a nice time; though, to tell the

truth, there had been something about Paul's manner, for some time past, that puzzled me a good deal, and vexed me quite as much.

We talked for some time quite at random; after that he said the most vexatious things imaginable, and, I was fast losing my temper, when, at last, he turned to me abruptly and said, with a look of amusement,

"Kate, what has become of Dick Walton?"

I blushed, and looked embarrassed.

"He has left the country, I think," I replied.

He took my hand, which was gloveless, and, holding up an emerald ring which he had given me some weeks before as a philopena, said,

"He wore just such a ring as that, Kate."

I caught my breath and answered,

"Yes. I lent him this one that day."

"Yes, and you lent him your eyes, and your nose, and your voice, too. He had a way of laughing very like you, too."

I was so vexed; but what could I say?

"Kate," continued Paul, "it was well done, but it must have been a far more perfect disguise to have deceived me."

I was crying, and he put his arm around me. "How did it happen," he said, "for I could see that it was scarcely a voluntary performance?"

I explained, in pouting tones, adding, "I never was so frightened in my life, Paul; but, once in the scrape, I couldn't get out of it."

I was vexed that he had seen me in that odious suit, and I would not have his arm around me. I knew he hated hoydens, and what must he think of me?

"Kate," he said, holding me still close, instead of withdrawing the arm as I bade him, "you are a good child, but a little wild; you need somebody to take care of you. Will you let me be that somebody? Will you be my wife?"

As if I wanted to marry a man to tyrannize over me. No, I wouldn't do anything of the sort, I told him.

"I think you will, Kate," he said, calmly. "I love you very much, and wouldn't be very cruel."

I looked into his eyes to see if he really meant it; and—well, I didn't make a fuss about the arm any more.

The next evening, Tom came over to introduce "the Count;" but, when I entered the room, I brought in my hand the false whiskers, and said to Tom that my cousin, Dick Walton, sent them, with his kind regards. He looked at them, and then at me, and, a sudden gleam of intelligence breaking slowly into his mind, said,

"Kate, I always said you were the deuce!"

I heard no more of "the Count." Paul had a

great deal of influence over Tom, and I believe he kept the secret of my masquerading; but, whenever I attempt any of my old games with Paul, he always calls me "Dick" to bring me to my senses.

Tom said to me, the other day,  
"Kate, you made a wise choice at last. I don't know any other man who would have wit enough to keep you steady. I shall always keep my curl, though."

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## ANTECEDENTS.

BY MRS. H. M. L. WARNER.

"THERE goes that two shilling delaine again! I declare, the sight of it makes me nervous," exclaimed Sylvia Harrington, as a lithe, graceful figure, in a Shaker sun-bonnet, and dark delaine dress, passed up the street; the fair, refined face, and graceful carriage would have arrested the attention of a pre-occupied, or even vulgar beholder. "Is it the delaine dress, or the fine figure of the wearer that disturbs you, sis?" queried her brother, watching until the last glimpse of the anathematized garment disappeared around the corner. Sylvia colored to the temples, but replied deprecatingly, "I do not think her handsome at all, though I dare say many would, I have no fancy for such tiny folks myself," and she glanced complacently at the well-developed figure and really pretty face reflected in the mirror opposite. "You do very well, sis," said Charles, nodding his head approbatively, "very well for a Juno, but give me a Hebe; Slocum admires tiny, fairy folk too." Sylvia's face grew carnation now. "Yes," she replied, with marked emphasis, "no doubt that is why Nelly Stephens is his favorite; people say they are quite intimate." It went home. Each had coined a story to give the other uneasiness, and each had been favored with success.

"Good morning!" exclaimed, at this instant, a healthy, musical voice at the door. "Speak of angels, and one sees their wings," quoted Sylvia, hastening forward to welcome Nelly Stephens, while Charles stood biting his lip, and looking irresistibly comical.

After the usual host of nothings were exhausted, Sylvia suddenly demanded, "Are you going to the Gibsons' party?" "I mean to *try* to get to go," Nelly replied, assuming the manner and tone of the family alluded to, to the great amusement of her hearers. "Sally Ann declares she intends it to be the smartest chance of a party there has been this season." "Yes," chimed in Sylvia, "young Markham, from Philadelphia, is to be there; she has secured his presence through the influence of Mr. Godwin, (looking very conscious,) as they were fast friends, he tells me." "By-the-way," said Nelly, laughing, "Sally Ann has decided on trying the power of her charms on this same

millionaire, as though he couldn't tell the difference between delf ware and porcelain. Speaking of porcelain, if little Mary Seaton isn't the real article, I never saw it." "Then you have called on her?" questioned Sylvia, hesitatingly. "Yes, indeed!" replied her vivacious visitor; "I did myself that pleasure at a very early day, and those who are tardy in cultivating her acquaintance will be losers, I assure you; her manners are so polished; her mind so well cultivated; and yet she is so unconscious of her own superiority, I think her an acquisition which our village decidedly needs." Sylvia listened to all this torrent of praise, without comment, a very praiseworthy thing inasmuch as her unruly member was burning to vent its spleen on this particular object of her dislike; but Sylvia was very politic, and knew that whatever she might say, the motive would be entirely transparent to Nelly Stephens, besides that young lady was a privileged person in Clintonville. Indeed Squire Stephens was the village autocrat, and all the Clintonians arose to do him honor, and not even one Mordecai sat at the king's gate. He was one of the few who dared to refer to their origin, and openly acknowledge, or, boasted rather, of having rung the bell, put the school room in order for his tuition, sawed wood for his board, and read Blackstone by firelight, until he had by sturdy perseverance grown to be one of the wealthiest, as well as most influential men in this little village, where he came an early pioneer.

Clintonville was a type of most Western villages: having representatives from nearly every state north of Mason's and Dixon's line; containing some worth, and intelligence, with a shocking preponderance of ignorance and assumption.

The young lady whose apparel had so tried Miss Sylvia's delicate nerves, was a late arrival, having accompanied her brother (a practicing physician) and his wife from S—, in Massachusetts. Mary Seaton had shocked the fastidious Clintonians in many marvelous ways; but the most trying of all was her plain dress; absolutely she had not appeared in silk since her advent among them, therefore she was

pronounced common by the mass on her first appearance at church, though the young ladies observed the bearded portion of the congregation stealing glances toward the choir, where the accession of a clear soprano voice added not a little to the erewhile inferior music.

Poor Miss Seaton was unmercifully dissected, every time she appeared in public, but she remained unruffled as a silver lake in moonlight, unconscious as a summer stream in a stilly afternoon. Perhaps the thought may have presented itself that the people were wanting in that cordiality and kindness due to strangers, and were at no pains to render her coming among them pleasant and agreeable. If such a thought was born in her mind it expired without utterance, and to all appearance she was tranquil and happy.

No doubt she felt this neglect, for society is particularly desirable to youth, and few are so exclusive as to wish to live entirely apart from the world. As yet none had called, except Nelly Stephens, and they were so mutually charmed with each other, that each looked for much enjoyment in future companionship.

It was late in October, and the first party of the season was about to come off. The Gibsons were a vulgar family, having grown suddenly rich from a rise in the market value of land. Of course their chief aim was to snub their less fortunate neighbors, and make a vulgar show.

They ignored all but the most fashionably dressed people, and had a most excruciating knack of murdering the king's English. There were three marriageable daughters, all possessing a certain puffy, blowzy sort of beauty, and they expanded their crinoline, and lifted their silk skirts after the most approved style, even at the risk of revealing number eight gaiters and appendages to match. The acme of all their petty hopes was to outrival Nelly Stephens. Now Nelly cared nothing about dress; she had been well dressed from a child. She could remember pitying the little Gibsons with their bare feet and unkemmed locks; but not so heartily as she pitied them now in their peacock dresses and rainbow bonnets; while they, poor things, imagined they were looking "right smart," and that the great world at Clintonville regarded them with enviously admiring eyes.

The night of the party arrived, and with it a bevy of curls, braids, and whiskers; every one invited came, for no one objected to the ices, confectionery, and good wines they were sure of tasting at the Gibsons; even if their tables were loaded with everything common, proper and improper.

"Oh! my!" exclaimed Sally Ann, running up to Nelly, "Mr. Markham has come, and he is the delightfulest man you ever seen. I seen him in the hall, and knowed him in a minute, he looks so extinguished. It isn't every one that has lived in Philadelphia." "Oh! no," replied Nelly, "Philadelphia would be obliged to extend its limits again if that were the case. But where is this lion?" "Mercy me!" ejaculated poor Sally Ann, "he isn't a lion, but a right smart-looking man. There he is talking with your father. I reckon your father don't have a chance to talk with such a man every day."

The assembly was getting mixed up and social, when Nelly ran up to Sylvia with an impetuous gesture, exclaiming, "Miss Gibson tells me that you declined attending the party, if Miss Seaton's name was among the invited. Please enlighten me as to why my favorite cannot be allowed to appear in your august presence?" "I decline mingling with people until I know something of their antecedents," Sylvia responded, with some hauteur. "Fudge!" ejaculated Nelly, contemptuously. "Antecedents indeed! What is our society made up of, with its odor of codfish, tallow, and candles? Antecedents indeed!" and Nelly shrugged her pretty shoulders with ineffable disgust.

"Are you so very exclusive, ladies?" questioned a voice at their elbow. "I am fortunate in having brought my credentials, for I should have regretted losing the pleasure this evening's reception has afforded me." "Gentlemen are never excluded, Mr. Markham," Nelly replied, with lingering scorn in her tone and manner, "all are admitted from a *ci devant* boot-black or barber up to the real gentleman. Mary Seaton has the effrontery to be intelligent, pretty, and well-bred, how then can we patronize her? We should organize a deputation and send to S——, to ascertain her real position, and whether she is entitled to our consideration." "Is it possible that the young lady, whose right to enter your society is questioned, can be Mary Seaton of Massachusetts?" exclaimed Mr. Markham. "Certainly," Nelly replied; "do you know her?" "I met her many times during last winter in Washington." "In Washington!" repeated Sylvia, aghast. "Her uncle is a member of Congress, and she is his favorite niece," continued Mr. Markham. "Miss Seaton's society was solicited by all the *élite*: she was the acknowledged belle in spite of her modest deportment and unaffected manners."

Nelly's eyes fairly danced with malicious pleasure as she turned them full upon Sylvia.

"She dresses so plainly," deprecated that young lady, "and then she washes her own muslins." "Miss Seaton has a fine property in her own right," said Markham, "but the income is chiefly used in educating two orphan nephews now at Cambridge. If she washes her muslins well," he continued, after a pause, "I suppose that is laudable too."

Mr. Markham was marvelously abstracted the remainder of the evening, and retired early. "Here I had decided," he soliloquized, on his way to his hotel, "on transacting my business with as much dispatch as possible, and hurrying to Massachusetts to learn my fate from her own lips, and providentially I am in the same village with her, and my heart fails me. She was always so self-possessed, I have nothing to hope for. But be brave, foolish heart, there is nothing like effort."

Mary was startled next morning by a rap at a very unseasonable hour. She opened the door in the anathematized delaine, with her hair pushed smoothly off her brow, looking just the lady she always did. In half an hour there was a satisfactory understanding. It is quite superfluous to put the interview into words. It

will answer our purpose to state that there were no protestations, no falling down on the knees, no tears shed: in fact, none of the proper and becoming things which are said to occur at this interesting period; but when they separated, an hour later, each looked pleased and happy. They were married unostentatiously, and the bride's attire was faultless at church the Sabbath before her departure; and many who had previously ignored her existence crowded around to receive introductions and offer congratulations.

In the closing paragraph of a letter addressed to Mrs. Mary Markham, Nelly chides her friend's husband in this wise:

"Why didn't that naughty worser half of yours reveal that Slocum Godwin was nothing but his barber in Philadelphia? The fact never reached Sylvia's ears until she had been Mrs. Godwin one week; then she did the tragic beautifully. I felt sorry for her; but father says they are equally yoked, why should not a barber consort with the daughter of a journeyman tailor? (low be it spoken, but that was Dr. Harrington's former employment.) So much for antecedents. Yours, NELLY STEPHENS.

## AUNT POLLY'S FORTUNE.

BY MRS. M. A. DENISON.

"I'm left all alone in the world, and why shouldn't I seek my fortune? I tell you what, Delia, I'm going to California."

So spake a pleasant faced woman. She was neatly dressed and thirty. She had never had an offer of marriage, and, what was more, she said she never desired one. Everybody believed up to that time that Miss Polly Saunders meant what she said, though it did seem strange.

Polly and Delia were sisters. The latter was the youngest, and had married a pleasant, but somewhat shiftless fellow; or, as he called himself, "one of the unlucky sort." Delia loved him, and was willing to be poor with him. They had one child, Neddy, his mother called him; and, as the sisters talked together, Neddy sat playing with blocks upon the floor.

"You don't mean what you say!" exclaimed Delia, stopping her ironing.

"I do mean what I say though."

"But how in the world are you going?"

"To work my way out, to be sure; do you suppose I'm too proud? No—no."

"I wouldn't," said Delia, reflectively.

"I will," cried Polly, decisively.

And the will carried it. Delia went, the next day, to see the steamer in which Polly had engaged to go as stewardess. It was a brave vessel, glittering from stem to stern. Polly took her sister into the great cabin. On one of the sofas sat a nursery maid with a child in her arms.

"Look! Oh! isn't she beautiful?" exclaimed Delia, her motherly heart all alive.

"Yes, the child is a pretty one," said her sister, carelessly.

"Pretty! it's a beautiful creature—it's as handsome as Neddy—sister, they look alike."

"Nonsense," replied Polly; but the bright blue eyes turning to her smiled in her face.

"She has got lovely eyes," she said, softly. "Who is it? What's her name, nurse?"

"Minnie Osgood," replied the young woman: "her father is a great man; you've heard of Mr. Osgood, the lawyer."

Yes, they had heard of him, and they turned away lingeringly.

"Oh! I wish!" exclaimed Delia, fervently.

"Well, what?"

"That they two might grow up for each other—might marry."

"What a ridiculous idea!" cried the unromantic Polly—"just as if it could be possible! Those babies!"

"It might, for all," muttered the ambitious mother.

"It might, but likely never will," was the rejoinder.

The good steamship sailed, and Polly was lost to her sister. Over the blue sea she went, undaunted by storms, unaffected by gales—a lone, but brave woman going to seek her fortune. She had no misgivings. There were her two hands—there was her stout heart—conquer adversity she would—her head should be above water.

Three, four years passed, and a correspondence was regularly kept up. Oh! those homely, illy-spelt, illy-constructed letters, how much pleasure they gave! From the "I take my pen in hand," to the "affectshantely youres," they were pored over with single-hearted interest. The mother listened to them over her knitting, and, when they were finished, invariably put her handkerchief to her eyes with a "There! I declare—I do wish I could see Polly!" Meanwhile Neddy was growing more beautiful, more intelligent. His father was an honest, pious soul, and brought him up in the fear of God.

Ten years had gone by, and a letter came saying that Polly was married to a Judge Norris. What could it mean? Their Polly, a hard-working woman, marry a judge, and he rich, too?

Well, aunt Polly was pretty, there was no denying that. That letter, however, was followed by no more; aunt Polly must have fallen a prey to avarice or the fashions.

Neddy was seventeen when they heard of Judge Norris' death. The news was brought by young Osgood, the elder brother of the child, whom, sixteen years before, Delia had seen in the arms of her nurse. The family had returned to their native state. For the first time Neddy Stanton and young Harry Osgood met, the poor boy and the rich. It was decidedly a case of love at first sight. From Harry Neddy learned that his aunt lived in style—was portly, handsome, and very rich. But she had doubtless forgotten her poor relations.

Three years passed. Neddy, a handsome, splendid fellow, began to have the blues. The fact is, Harry had got him into trouble by making him acquainted with beautiful little Minnie Osgood. He loved her, she loved him, but the proud family (all but Harry) said "Nay." Indeed, they took the trouble to be scornful about it.

"Dear, blessed Harry!" little Minnie used to say, when he took that particular note and conveyed it faithfully.

"Hold up your head—don't despair yet," was Harry's motto to his friend, but Neddy came pretty near it.

Neddy was twenty-three—his blues had deepened awfully, for Harry had gone into business on South, and he could not hear from Minnie. One evening, he sat disconsolately thinking desperate things. Somehow life wasn't worth having, after all, in his estimation, at least. The postman called at the door, leaving a large package, for which he asked a large price. It was opened in wondering silence. Alas! poor aunt Polly was dead; but—Neddy Stanton was her heir to the tune of seventy thousand dollars. Poor Neddy looked stupid over it for a long time, he couldn't realize it. Seventy thousand! why that was about enough to set a man up, wasn't it? Buy father a good house—get sis a piano—make mother comfortable for life—and, yes, marry Minnie Osgood!

It proved to be. The prophetic wish of Delia came about all in good time. Seen through golden spectacles, Neddy Stanton was pronounced "good." There was a grand wedding, and Neddy Stanton isn't very far from the top of the ladder of fame. Aunt Polly's fortune did not come amiss.



## HARRY AND I.

BY EMILY S. BOUTON.

It was the June of the year. Bright, beautiful June; that witching month when Dame Nature pours her richest treasures into the lap of mother Earth; paints the sky its most dazzling blue; dyes the grass with brightest green; hangs glorious festoons of blushing roses upon graceful vines and waving shrubs, and arrays every living thing in a garb of beauty.

One bright afternoon, I was standing upon the vine-wreathed porch of my father's house, tying up a refractory honeysuckle, when, raising my head, I met the mischievous glance of young Harry Lee, who had approached unperceived, and was waiting, hat in hand, upon the lower step until I should look up.

"A happy day to you, fair lady," he said, in a half-mock deferential tone.

I dignified him no reply, save a short, cold nod, and returned to my work again.

Now be it known that this same Harry Lee and I had quarreled sadly the previous evening, and parted in greater anger than we had ever before felt toward each other. Harry was the son of an old neighbor, the playmate of my childhood, the trusted companion of my youth, and, as years passed away, the ties that bound us together had strengthened until we were now betrothed lovers. It was one of those quiet loves, when every fibre of the heart has become unconsciously entwined about the life of another, and they have drawn freshness from the clear waters of that soul; when none dream of its strength until these fibres must be wrenched away. My whole being was enriched by the warmth and brightness of his; my faith in human nature was always greater after I had been with him; my heart and hands were stronger to do the work God had placed before me. So does a pure human love ennoble the spirits of earth-born mortals. But I thought not of this then. I was a wayward girl, prone to take offence, yet ready to forgive, save when the shafts of ridicule were leveled at me, and then I became exasperated beyond measure.

Harry had overtaken himself with study, and, as a consequence, had been compelled to return home from college and rest awhile. The days had been full of enjoyment to me, until a slight difference of opinion about some trivial matter had caused a quarrel.

Harry stood patiently until I had finished my task, and, then stooping, looked roguishly in my face.

"What, angry yet, Maggie?" he said. "I thought a night's sleep would certainly restore your good humor."

"You thought wrong then," I replied, tartly, giving the early rose-bush near which I stood a sudden jerk, which brought down a shower of leaves around us.

"Come, Maggie, let us take a walk down to our old trysting-place," he said, presently, taking no farther notice of my petulance. "You know I haven't been there since I came home."

"He wants to ask me to forgive him," thought I, exultingly, as I went into the house for my bonnet.

We took our way through the garden into the path spanning the meadows, now spangled with golden buttercups and mild-eyed daisies, while a few late, modest, blue-robed violets shrank away from my feet; took our way silently and thoughtfully along, till we reached a large, old tree bending over the mill stream, that told a thousand mysteries, if one would but stop and listen to its noisy murmurings.

It was, as Harry said, our old trysting-place. Here we had come together, in the spring, when the fruit trees were flinging down a thick spray of pearls and rubies upon the soft green grass; in the summer, when the golden grain rolled in billows where the breeze danced over it; and in the delicious autumn time, when the soft haze, as a misty veil, drooped over the landscape, and the gorgeous tree-drapery, like bright-winged birds, was falling, fluttering to the earth; in each and all of these seasons we had come thither, and there, within sound of the waterfall, had woven sweet dreams of the glorious, happy, and good lives we would live together, when the music of our earthly existence should be our good deeds. But no pleasant memories of those times thronged upon me now; there was only the feeling of vexation that Harry's next words did not tend to decrease.

"Maggie," and there was laughter in the very tones of his voice. "Now tell me in right down good earnest, are you really angry with me—and does it hurt your feelings much—and don't you ever mean to get over it?"

"Yes, Harry Lee," I almost snapped in reply, as I turned toward him, "yes, I am angry with you, and it don't hurt me at all, and I don't mean to get over it, for I do believe I *hate* you, Harry Lee."

"Oh! that's foolish," he laughed, in reply. "You know you couldn't possibly do that, for you love me so much, little gipsy. You've told me so a thousand times," and again the merry brown eyes peeped saucily under my bonnet.

This was too much. He had insulted me, I felt, had made light of the holiest feelings of my heart, and I would punish him. But now I was too deeply incensed to speak, so I sprang away from him with a quick bound, and ran with all my might, unheeding his calls to me to return, until I reached the edge of the orchard, a short distance from the house. Here I paused and looked around, but Harry was not in sight, though I knew that he was following me by the sound of his clear, rich voice singing, "Oh! whistle, and I'll come to you, my lass." It was very evident that he did not yet believe I was so deeply offended, and I resolved that he should realize it to his sorrow. I looked hastily around for a good hiding-place till he had passed. A maple tree, whose branches came very near to the ground, and whose thick, green foliage had often screened me when a child, stood near. As my eye fell upon it, quick as the lightning's flash came the thought, "I'll climb it. What if I am eighteen and engaged? Who cares? besides no one will see me." No sooner said than done. Up I went like a cat, and was just snugly ensconced upon one of the lower limbs, when Harry appeared slowly sauntering along. What was my consternation to see, that, instead of taking the path to the house, he was coming directly to the very tree in which I was perched! He soon reached its broad shade, and, throwing himself carelessly upon the grass without a single upward glance, took a book from his pocket, and went to reading as coolly as if there was no such distressed young damsel as I in the world. I was fairly *tired*. I was puzzled to know whether he was aware of my whereabouts, and was determined to keep me there awhile, or, being resolved to show his indifference, had thrown himself there to pass away the time. "I can stay here as long as you," I thought, defiantly.

Well, we *did* stay. I would not stir a muscle for fear he might hear me, and oh! how wearily dragged the hours, as, in my uncomfortable seat, I watched the shadows lengthen, and the sun sink away to rest in the purple canopied West. At last, overcome by fatigue and the

utter stillness around me, I fell asleep, my hands loosed their hold, and, horror of horrors! down I came, with a crashing of the boughs, plump upon the turf, catching convulsively at Harry's head, and, finally, sprawling in a collapsed state at his feet. Here was a pretty *contretemps*; and although I was not hurt, only stunned for a moment, yet, overcome by chagrin and mortification, I remained perfectly motionless, with closed eyes where I had fallen.

As Harry saw this, he paused in the merry laugh with which, after the first start, he had greeted me, and came hastily to my side. I fancied I could see the pained, anxious look upon his face, as he bent over me, saying, "Maggie, darling Maggie, are you hurt? Oh! God, if my folly *should* have killed her," and the hand which took mine trembled violently.

He turned away to go, as I knew, to the spring after some water to bathe my face. I waited until he was at a little distance, then springing to my feet, hastened rapidly toward the house. He saw my flight, and a few rapid footsteps brought him to my side.

"Playing possum, were you, Maggie?" he queried. "But you don't know," he continued, in a grave tone, "how you frightened me. I thought perhaps you were dead, Maggie, and then oh! life would have been so desolate for me, darling!" There was a few moments' silence, and then he spoke again, and the old mischievous tones had returned.

"Maggie, next time you hide, look out for those flowing skirts. The cloven foot will peep out, Mag."

So he had known of my presence all those long hours, and had purposed to weary me. My heart, which his tender words had thrilled with joy, grew hard again. I would make him suffer yet, and I turned toward him so calm and cold that I saw he was startled.

"Harry Lee," I said, proudly, "you mistake me, if you think I can be ridiculed and mocked in this way with impunity. You were not so secure of my affection as that. Henceforth remember, sir, we are but friends," and I turned away.

For one moment he stood as if thunderstruck, then springing forward, caught me by the arm and exclaimed,

"Maggie, you are not, you *cannot* be in earnest. Do you mean it, Maggie, mean that for a mere joke, we shall be separated forever? No, no, you are only jesting with me now; trying to punish me as I deserved for my presumption," and he looked eagerly, wistfully in my face.

"I am in earnest, Harry Lee," I answered, giving full rein to my passion, and determined that he should suffer to the utmost, "as you will find to your cost."

He grew deathly pale; and at last said, "May God forgive you, Margaret Deane, for thus making a wreck of my life. I believe you are utterly heartless," and he walked hastily away. A moment later he came back to where I stood, took me in his arms, pushed the hair away from my forehead, and I could see in the gathering twilight that his features worked convulsively. Passionately kissing my brow he murmured, "I did not mean those cruel words, Maggie, but I am very wretched. This is worse than death," then adding, "God bless and keep you, darling, and make you happy," he left me.

I watched him until he was out of sight, then walked slowly into the house, up stairs to my own room, threw myself upon the bed and clasping my hands over my eyes wept long and bitterly. What had I done? To gratify my foolish pride and anger, I had cast from me, trampled under foot the dearest boon of happiness the earth contained. And yet, such was my willful nature, I would not have taken one step toward a reconciliation, even though I knew not to do so would be a life time of misery. I had brought it upon myself, and I would bear the consequences. He, I thought, would soon get over it, his studies would occupy his mind, and give him little time for painful thought; besides he was a man, and never, never felt such things as acutely as women.

The next day Harry Lee left the village, and I returned to my usual routine of duties; but, as weeks passed on, the bounding step became slow and listless, the rosy cheek pale, and the joyous tones with which I was wont to greet my father (my mother was dead and I kept house for him) grew sad and low. He noticed the change at last, but, when he questioned me, I told him that I was perfectly well, only the summer heats had overcome me, but with winter's bracing air I should be his own merry girl again. I saw he was not satisfied, and once I heard him say, in wrathful tones, "If that young Harry Lee has been trifling with her he shall pay for it." It was just after a neighbor had been in "to tell us the news," she said, looking curiously at me, and then she proceeded with the information that Harry was engaged to a beautiful girl in New Haven, and they were to be married in the summer, as soon as he had graduated. I bore up bravely as long as her argus eyes were upon me, but when she had gone my forced composure gave way, and I

sobbed in anguish. I thought that I was alone, but my father was in the next room and overheard it all. He never spoke to me of it, however, but there was a deeper tenderness in his tones, a more watchful care for my comfort than ever before.

Well, the winter passed. The warm sun awoke the earth and set its great pulse to beating, until forth from its bosom sprang a million forms of beauty. Every living thing seemed sending up a song of joy and praise, but to me there was no joy, no beauty. My heart lay cold and dead.

The spring waned, and summer, in all its glory, was with us.

I was sitting, one bright morn, by the open window, when the sound of wheels attracted my attention, and, looking up, I met the gaze of Harry Lee. By his side sat a radiant creature in the first flush of womanhood. He raised his hat with a respectful bow, which I mechanically returned, and the carriage rolled on.

He was married then. It was all over, that bitter dream. Well, God help me, I thought.

That night I wended my way down to the old trysting-place. I do not know what prompted me to go there unless it was to live over that last bitter meeting and parting. I seated myself beneath the old tree, and was soon lost in a painful reverie. The mill stream sang as noisily as of old, the shifting sunlight played coquettishly with the shadows of the leaves upon the grass around me, and was broken into a thousand shining masses by their waving clusters, but I heeded them not.

How long I sat there I know not, but I was suddenly aroused by a strong arm passed around my waist, a hand placing a cluster of half-opened moss roses on my lap, while a manly voice, I knew but too well, murmured in my ear, "Maggie, my own darling Maggie. Can you forgive me now?" I could not speak; my heart was too full for that; but the hot tears gushed from my eyes as I lay still, very still, in the shelter of his arms. Very softly he wiped them away, speaking the while words of endearment which thrilled my heart through and through. Suddenly came the memory of that girl, his wife. I sprang from his embrace, and, for the second time in that place, confronted him with flashing eyes and crimsoned cheeks.

"How dare you speak to me in that way, Harry Lee," I exclaimed, "when your very word and caress belongs to another?"

"Another! What do you mean, Maggie?" asked Harry, looking at me in utter astonishment.

A light was beginning to glimmer through the darkness which had shrouded me.

"Are you not married, then? Was not that girl with you to-day your wife?" I spoke hurriedly and eagerly.

"No, indeed," he answered, a glad light coming into his eyes as he again drew me toward him. "It was my cousin, Maggie, and the be-

trothed bride of my chum, Ned Allyn. As if I could marry any one but you, darling."

I need not tell you that there was a wedding in my father's little parlor in the fall, nor how happy I have been all these years, walking down the vale of life by the side of my noble husband. May God give you as bright a lot, dear reader.

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## THE RULING PASSION.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860, by Mrs. Ann S. Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CONTINUED FROM VOL. XXXVII., PAGE 474.

## CHAPTER XV.

NEW HAVEN is one of the most beautiful places on earth at the present day, when the green mountains are shorn of their forest-crowns, and cultivation has taken the place of picturesque loveliness. But it was wilder, more broken, and altogether more romantic, before the Revolution. Then a few pleasant houses, with church spires and the college buildings, were to be seen through a bower of trees only. The country that lay between the sound and the steep foot of the green mountains was wild as a forest. Here and there patches of cultivation gleamed out from the shadows, and rustic dwellings sent their smoke up through the pines and hemlocks; but the great features of the landscape were altogether at variance with the arcadian scene which now presents itself. Two or three dwellings were nestled at the foot of East Rock, forming the germ of what was, in my first remembrance, called Holchkistown, and the low precipice which now overhangs that village seemed far less bold and forbidding, from the undergrowth and great trees that clothed it half way up, and crowned it on the top with a noble forest that swayed and tossed to every passing wind.

In one glance of the eye was combined the most lovely arcadian scenery, guarded by rugged mountains and almost arched by a zone of sparkling waters, over which the white sails flew like doves in the northward and southward passage.

A few rods down from the college green, fronting on Chapel street, stood a large wooden building, with double verandahs and low oaken doors. A huge elm swept the roof with its foliage, and low down, on one of its great branches, swung a weather-beaten sign, on which the British lion had raved and pawed his way upward for more than twenty years. In this house young Arnold made his home. The bird-like ships we have spoken of brought the merchandise which was fast enriching him from the West Indies; and, far down on the "long wharf," he had erected a stone house of considerable pretension. In fact,

of all the traders settled in that town, he was among the most daring and the most energetic.

Beyond these evident proofs of prosperity, vague rumors had gone abroad of events that might cast into his power, at a single grasp, greater wealth and position than he could hope to obtain, even by a life-time of the most successful enterprise. It was said that the bold, handsome person of this young man had won a heart which would bring almost fabulous wealth into his control. The beautiful young French girl, who had turned even wise heads with her grace and fascinations—who had driven half the students of Yale college crazy with admiration of her black eyes and superb toilet—had fallen under willing subjection to Benedict Arnold. During the winter she had constantly been seen in his sleigh, enjoying long drives along the coast, or by his side in the promenade, when her subdued and almost timid air of happiness gave force to the current rumor.

If she went to a party, the joyous sparkle of her eyes was clouded till he appeared. In truth, though a proud and sensitive girl, she took no pains to conceal her love; nay, her adoration, for it amounted to that which filled her being in his presence; nay, she rather gloried in her devotion, and not only forgave his display of it, but seemed pleased that he should so openly claim her.

Thus the winter passed. Paul had made one or two trips to Norwich, where his quiet, and almost disregarded, suit prospered with gentle Hannah Arnold so, he was in no haste to move farther from her presence, and rested content within reach of her home.

Paul was a sensitive and over-refined man: so delicate in his mental organization that he shrunk from interfering in the love affairs of his sister, and was, in truth, less informed of her real position than many a stranger who had made the lovers objects of attention. Thus he never spoke of this evident attachment to Hannah Arnold, and she, sensitive and shy as himself, asked no questions. In fact it had arisen, no one knew how, that the whole

subject was a forbidden one. Arnold had managed to convey this feeling so completely, without committing himself by words, that it was an idea rather than an understanding between himself and the lady.

And were these two persons engaged? Not in the usual acceptance of the term. From the time that Arnold had left his home, the irresolution and amazing variability of spirit that had marked his conduct there, changed. In his attentions he was frank and ardent: imperious certainly, that was in his nature; even self-interest could not change anything in this respect, but as far as manner went, he was everything that ardent and devoted young creature could desire. What was the need of words where two persons understood each other so well?

Up to the spring, Paul and his sister had lived at the same public house with Arnold—that which fronted on Chapel street, and was sheltered by the great elm tree with its world of foliage and creaking sign—but when the violets came out under the East Park, and the hemlock buds came forth in their soft, golden green all along the mountains, Laura began to grow a little restive. The winter months had flown, and there she was, engaged in spirit, but not in fact, exactly as she had been at the Christmas time. Even her generous faith began to waver a little now; and when Paul, one day, suggested a desire to know something of her plans, that he might regulate his own by them, she flew into a girlish passion at first, and then burst into tears, protesting that she had no plans—how could she have and he not know them?

Paul heard this with a glow of indignation, for he believed that Laura was trifling with him; but when he saw that she was in earnest, and that no actual engagement existed between his sister and Arnold, all the iron in his nature rose to the surface; and, taking his hat, he went down to the wharf, for the first time in his life, and entered Arnold's place of business.

What passed between the two young men is of no moment here, save that the interview left Arnold in clear possession of all the information he had been constantly searching for regarding the amount of wealth with which Laura would be endowed on the day of her marriage, while Paul became more and more thoughtful as the conversation proceeded; for, with the keen intuition, which is the blessing and curse of refined natures like his, he felt the selfishness of Arnold's character, but was altogether too just for condemnation where no positive proof existed. Perhaps his own heart was a little at

fault. In his love for the gentle sister, Paul was willing to believe himself unjust when a thought against one of her blood rose in his heart.

All that afternoon Laura was in tears, with the quick translation so natural to an impulsive character. She had passed from a state of confidence to one of deep, deep depression. No, she was sure of it. Arnold had been amusing himself with her; his vanity had been interested, nothing more. Paul was right. She had read his opinion clearly in his face. Arnold did not love her. She had been deceiving herself all the time. Paul knew it—the whole world would know it—the very thought drove her wild. She walked to and fro in the room, restless with excitement.

She flung herself on the high-backed sofa, and, shutting her eyes, tried to think steadily, while she listened for some footstep which would bring her news. The security in which she had been dwelling made her present state of turbulent doubt all the more painful.

At last Paul came home, grave and sad. He said nothing of his interview with Arnold, and Laura only questioned him with her great, eager eyes that grew heavy with dread, when she saw no cheerfulness in his glance.

"Paul, brother Paul," she said, at last, holding out her hands, "have you nothing to tell me?"

Paul was touched by her pleading humility. He knelt down by the sofa, as a lover might have done, and took her head between his hands, laying his cheek against the heavy braids of her hair.

"Have patience, my sister—only a little patience. In another day all this shall be settled."

"Ah! does he want time?" faltered Laura, turning pale. "Have you made a claim on his heart? Oh! Paul."

"I have to deal with his honor and ours," said the young man, with decision.

"His honor! And has it come to that? His honor!"

Her face began to burn like fire, and hot flushes ran down her hands and arms.

"Hush! be quiet, Laura; there is nothing, as yet, to distress yourself about. He was not so frank as I would wish; but that may be from embarrassment. The peculiar nature of our interview was enough to unsettle any man."

"Embarrassment!" said Laura, brightening a little; for her imagination had run so far ahead of the facts, that Paul's words gave an immediate sense of relief. "Embarrassment! No, no, he is never embarrassed. Nothing even

takes him unawares. His self-possession is regal. It is for this I—there, there, don't look at me so anxiously—how foolish we have been—nothing has happened, after all. You have been to him with that darling, grave face, like a grand signor, and asked him serious questions, which are always awkward between men. He is proud as an emperor—my Arnold, and would not be forced into answers that should only be whispered, you know. I blush for our delicacy, Paul. It makes me shiver in all my nerves that you should have spoken to him—offered your sister on compulsion, as it were.”

“No, I have not done that. Your delicacy is safe in my hands, Laura. I have made the way clear, if he loves you, that is all.”

“If he loves me, Paul! and have you a doubt?” cried the poor girl, turning white.

“God forbid!” faltered the young man, growing more and more distressed, as he marked these evidences of the deep passion that possessed her. “To-morrow, I hope, you will be satisfied that I need have no distrust on that point. There is no reason why he should not speak out now. Before this he may have hesitated to offer his small prosperity against your wealth, for he is very proud.”

“Oh! yes, as he should be; for who is his equal?”

“But that is all done away with. I have even sacrificed a little proper reserve to save this pride—don't look reproachful; I know how to protect your delicacy, sister.”

“Ah! if I knew how to protect my own pride,” said Laura, turning her face impotently on the sofa pillow. “But with him it melts away like snow. Don't trust me, Paul, I have no dignity left.”

Paul shook his head, and regarded her with an anxious smile, muttering to himself, “Will any one ever love me so?”

Laura did not heed him; for a clock which stood in a corner of the room rang out the hour from its heavy oaken case, and she was startled to find how late it was. Rising from the sofa, she glanced at her morning-dress of fine chintz, and, blushing like a naughty child, cried out,

“He will be here in a few minutes. See how I look! Good-by, Paul, for a little time, to-morrow we will be happier.”

“Yes,” muttered Paul, in a low voice, “happier or away from this place.” But his heart sank as he reflected how completely his own fate was involved in that of his sister. Henceforth he must be closely connected with Arnold, or his enemy. The enemy of Hannah's brother. He shrunk from the idea, and hoped, almost as

passionately as Laura herself, that this, a position so painful every way, might be spared to him.

Burdened with these thoughts, he had scarcely removed from his seat when Laura returned, with her red-heeled shoes pattering on the floor, and her dress of brocaded silk looped up with knots of green ribbon, over a quilted skirt of rose-colored satin, which was short enough to exhibit the embroidered clocks on each side her symmetrical ankles. Fine old yellow lace floated around her arms and on her bosom. All the folds of her dress rustled as she moved, giving an idea of sumptuousness to her presence which accorded well with the taste of her lover.

Paul smiled, as the idea presented itself. Laura blushed under his gaze, and strove to throw off all embarrassment by a conscious laugh, which gave a charm to her singular beauty touchingly child-like. She seemed half ashamed of her rich toilet—more than ashamed of the impulse that had induced her to put it on, all of which her brother read at a glance. He held out his hand; she came close to his side, flushing like a tea rose.

“Am I very ugly, my brother?” she said, pressing a pair of lips that glowed like ripe cherries on his forehead.

He looked up to her face with a glance of tender admiration.

“You are too lovely—too good for——”

She stopped his mouth with her hand, and looked seriously down into his eyes.

“Not that. Oh! don't say that, Paul. He is not gentle and good as you are; but who is worthy of him? Think how brave, how lordly, and full of ambition he is. Then remember, brother Paul, that he saved my life.”

Still Paul looked grave. All her charming blandishments could not win the suspicion from his heart. Laura saw this, and the impatient blood rushed to her forehead.

“At any rate he has one merit,” she said, with malicious playfulness.

“What is that, lady bird?”

“He is Hannah Arnold's brother.”

She had her revenge; the thrill that passed through his whole frame was proof enough of that, so her mouth curved and trembled with smiles, as she triumphed over his confusion.

“Ah! have I found you out, brother? The love folly does not lie entirely on the female side of our house. Look up! look up! I cannot see your eyes for those long, black lashes; besides, you are blushing—upon my word and honor you are blushing like a girl.”

“It is at your folly, then.”

"Well, well, it is all in the family, you know, so don't be hard on Benedict, or I will retaliate and point out the faults of *le petite sœur*."

"Her faults! She has none, the angel!"

"Oh! ha! So it has gone so far as that? Angel indeed! The demure little mouse, with her smooth hair and soft step. A fine example of deceit you have been placing before an innocent sister, Monsieur Paul. I blush for your duplicity."

"Hush! Laura, this is not a subject for jesting."

"Jesting! upon my word I am delightfully in earnest. What a charming family party we shall make. Does Arnold know of it?"

"There is nothing for him to know—nothing but what your wild imagination invents."

"Oh! brother."

"You look incredulous, but it is true."

"Then Hannah Arnold is nothing! There is no love-history between you! I don't believe it."

"I did not say so, only that there was nothing to tell. When you speak of love and that sweet girl, it should be with reverence and in a low voice as we whisper our prayers. I have scarcely dared to breathe the word in her presence, and yet I worship her."

"Ah! Paul, my dear, dear brother, then you can feel for me and have charity for him; perhaps, with all his bravery, he trembles at the thought of speaking out such feelings in language. It is like shaking the bright dew from one's violets in the gathering. Don't you think so, Paul?"

The young man looked at her glowing face, and his eyes filled with loving admiration. He felt all the beauty of her bright sayings. How true this one was to his inward thought! What a clear, delicate mind the girl had, with all her waywardness and passion! Surely the mate for a creature like that should be full of strength and honor. Was Arnold that man?

Again his heart misgave him, and, to conceal the depression that came on with each vague doubt, he arose and left the room.

Laura was glad to see him go. Every moment she expected to hear Arnold's step on the stairs. She knew that a crisis in her fate was approaching, and wished to be alone. The dreamy happiness in which she had been reposing was broken up forever; and she felt like a bird let loose in some dreary wilderness, doubtful of any place where its nest could be built.

Laura grew impatient, as the dusk stole on. Arnold's hour for visiting her little parlor had passed, and the oaken clock went ticking on with harassing steadiness into the next hour.

She walked to the window softly, as if there existed some sin in the movement, and peered through the crimson curtains. The street was empty, or, if any one passed, it was some stranger, whom she hated for being the wrong person. Then she strove to walk off her impatience, and paced up and down the room, passing and re-passing a little mirror, out of which her face gleamed back and forth like that of a sybil, waiting, pale and trembling, for the inspiration for which she has watched and prayed.

A hundred times, that evening, the young girl stopped to listen, holding her breath, and turning white with keen expectation. Some noise at the door—some foot-fall in the street—had arrested her; but the sound invariably passed away, leaving her like a statue, as cold, and almost as lifeless. Then the strife of hope recommenced, and the pain of renewed expectation smote her with renewed poignancy, up and down before the mirror, hating the clock for its methodical ticking, as a soulless thing that cruelly measured her way to fresh disappointment, listening with a double sense; and, with the cold tears standing on her cheek, she wandered through that lonesome evening, waiting for him in vain.

When hope had almost left her, and she was chilled through with a feeling of desertion, the outside door opened, and she heard footsteps on the stairs. Again each breath came, like a frightened thing, from her heart; the heavy lustre of her eye kindled, and through her frame went the tingling of revived hope. It was his step. Surely it *was* his step. No, no, the imperious resonance was wanting. It was—alas! it was Paul, coming, and her there alone, heart-broken, humbled to the dust.

She could not bear that; but, with a wild sob, burst from the room and hid herself, like a frightened deer, under the covert of drapery that fell over a couch, where she was to find nothing but pain and unrest. No matter, she had secured darkness in which to hide herself—profound silence which would receive her sobs without mocking them. That moment her humiliation seemed complete.

## CHAPTER XVI.

WHERE was Benedict Arnold all this time? Was he indeed the recreant this sudden desertion seemed to proclaim him?

Far in the depths of the forest, that clothed the foot of East Rock, and spread up to the verge of the town, he had wandered; not for solitude, nor in search of that quiet which leads



to the enjoyment of happy feelings, but in search of a place where the evil thought which had, for months, been engendering in his heart could be worked out in safety.

A narrow footpath ran along what is now a broad highway, and curved down into the very heart of the forest, where a thick grove of pines made a pleasant twilight, even of the noon sun. The path wandered on through entangled elms, beeches, and maples, up to the very summit of the mountain, and fitful gleams of moonlight fell upon it through the branches all the way; while dogwood, wild honeysuckles, and budding grape-vines, perfumed the night air, and streamed over the path, like banners, through all its windings. Still Arnold sought the black heart of the forest, and stood under its densest pines, before he spoke a word to the companion who had accompanied him from the town, of the thoughts that were consuming him.

Rapidly, and in silence, he had threaded the narrow footpath, trampling down the soft wood-mosses, and crushing the violets under his feet, as if a sense of destruction satisfied the fever-excitement that possessed him. Sometimes he would push aside the flowering branches that fell across his path, with a burst of muttered wrath, dashing the lovely blossoms over the man who walked behind him in a storm of unheeded sweetness. The recoiling branch struck this man in the face more than once, but he made no complaint, and only answered the half-sneering apology offered by Arnold with a vague smile, which gleamed unpleasantly on his face as a ray of moonlight fell upon it through the trembling leaves. Thus, with but brief snatches of speech, the two men penetrated the woods, till they stood on a swelling undulation of land which afforded a dreamy view of the country around. In this spot, some of the trees had been cut away, preparatory to a clearing. The undergrowth in full blossom, and trailing vines, tangled themselves overhead without obstructing the view. The moonlight was full and clear, weaving its silver with the mists of the forest, and giving the clear, black outlines of the East and West Rocks with minute distinctness. The Sound lay below them, like a lake of sleeping mist. As they looked toward the mountains, the town lay to the right, far out of view or hearing, save that a slender steeple, or two, shot into the sky against a background of burning stars.

After standing for a moment on this swell of land, bathed in the moonlight—the two men looking away from each other all the time—they descended the slope which led into the

deep forest, and walked very rapidly down to the centre of the pine woods, where the darkness was dense as midnight, and a thick carpet of dead leaves muffled their footsteps, as if they were treading on velvet.

When the darkness was so thick that the very outlines of the persons were lost, Arnold paused, leaned against a tree for an instant, and then slid noiselessly down to the carpet of pine leaves, which were heavy and wet with rain that had fallen the day before, and in that deep shade had scarcely begun to exhale. Arnold pressed his hands down hard upon the mass of leaves, as if the moisture and coolness were pleasant to him.

"Sit down," he said, to the young man who stood in the darkness, "sit down, for I have a good deal to talk about, and you will get tired standing there like the steeple to a ruined church."

"No, the ground is wet, I can feel the chill through my boots already. You had better stand up yourself, for it strikes me the air has made you hoarse: a cold may be serious at this time of the year."

"I am not at all delicate," said Arnold, sweeping a moist hand over his forehead, and dropping it to the earth again. "Besides, the air is close and hot here, my forehead is burning."

"And yet, as I said before, there is a hoarseness in your voice I never heard there before. It seems unnatural, and chills me through and through."

"You are sensitive, as sensitive as ever," answered Arnold, with a sneer, "but that is a part of your profession."

The young man shuddered under this sneer.

"Come out of this darkness," he said, "I do not like it."

"I do," was the rude reply; "but, if you are afraid of the dark, I will indulge you for once; but remember, my dear Osborne, that whatever I desire to do that do I; spare me farther argument or advice about anything I may say or do."

The minister's pale cheek flushed a little at the insolent tone, but he made no reply: and the darkness concealed his agitation.

"I want to talk with you," said Arnold; "sit down, if you please—I hate to see a man look so deucedly uncomfortable."

"There is really no safe place to sit," he answered.

"Oh! nonsense! There's a log lying in that gleam of moonlight—I don't think that you will be injured."

Osborne seated himself upon the log, yielding, like all who came in contact with that singular man, to his will, always exercised in the least as in the greatest things.

"What do you wish to say?" asked the minister.

Arnold did not answer. He lay gloomily watching the moonlight flicker through the branches, and listening to the solemn music of the pines as if the sound troubled him.

"This is a pretty scene," he said, laughing hoarsely; "if either you or I were a poet, friend Osborne, we should find ample material here for a dozen sonnets."

The clergyman smiled, but with an effort. He knew Arnold well enough to suspect that there was something hidden beneath his forced playfulness, and he felt a deeper sense of anxiety than the uneasiness which that man's presence usually brought upon him.

"A few minutes ago," continued Arnold, "I saw the spire of your church; did you remark it?"

The minister shaded his eyes with his hand, and looked uneasily at his friend.

"I did not look for it," he said, in a troubled voice, "the distance is so great."

"My eyes are stronger than yours," returned Arnold, with an unpleasant laugh. "It is a very pretty church; I have heard you preach many a fine sermon there."

The clergyman turned abruptly away—his hands twisted themselves over his walking-stick, and he felt a deathly pallor creeping over his face.

"You are a great favorite with your congregation," pursued his tormentor.

"I—I have tried to do my duty by them, at least," he answered, with a strong effort.

"I have no doubt of it! And how the pretty girls do flock there. I say, Osborne, what a quantity of lambs there are in your flock; old Hurlburt has nothing but a lot of ugly sheep in his fold! What is the secret of your success?"

"Mr. Arnold," replied the minister, with considerable firmness, "you have chosen a sorry subject for a jest! Whatever my own faults have been, I have endeavored to preach God's word to my hearers! I scarcely dare pray to Him for myself—but never toward one of my people have I been guilty of a wrong."

"Really you are very eloquent," said Arnold. "My dear fellow, what a strange person you are! Don't go off in heroics—I was only laughing at you, there is no reason for being angry."

"I am not, Arnold."

"That is well! I believe you consider me your friend, do you not? I hope so, at any rate, for I am about to test you."

The clergyman stepped hastily back.

"Heaven help me!" he exclaimed; "I don't know—I can't tell!"

"Upon my word," returned Arnold, apparently more amused than offended by his companion's words and manner, "that is a charming remark! You are more frank than usual."

"You have helped me," said the clergyman; "yes, you have done me a great kindness; but was it not through you that I was led into the error that made it necessary for me to place myself under this obligation?"

"Have done, Osborne!" replied Arnold, coldly. "Never blame another person for your own weakness—have the courage to carry your sins upon your own shoulders, however heavy the load may be. I, at least, am brave enough for that."

"I will—I do! I do not mean to exculpate myself—I know that I am a weak, sinful wretch——"

"There you go again! My dear friend, you are really too nervous and excitable."

"I am indeed—I know it!"

"Listen to me, Osborne."

"What is it?" he asked, drearily.

"I want you to do me a favor."

"Anything that lies in my power you know I will do to serve you," he replied, in the same dreary, pained tone.

"I think so, that is the reason I have made up my mind to ask it—you know I do not like refusals."

"You are not likely to get one from me."

"I think not," he said, musingly, yet with a sort of threat like an undertone pervading his speech; "I think not."

Osborne shivered, his hands shook so violently that his stick fell to the ground—but he never moved his eyes from Arnold's face, it appeared impossible for him to do so, although it was evident that he suffered from the very effort of forcing his eyes to meet the piercing orbs that seemed to glare at him through the broken light.

"You are cold," said Arnold; "you are shivering."

"Only a little—very little."

"You students are so tender—you ought to all live in hot-houses."

"But what did you wish to ask me, Arnold?" he inquired, with an anxiety that he tried in vain to conceal.

"Nothing of much consequence—a mere

trifle, in fact, according to my way of thinking."

"Then it will not be difficult?"

"No, no—don't be afraid that I am going to make any great demand upon your friendship."

"You know I did not mean that, Arnold—you know I did not!"

"I am sure I can't tell what you do mean."

"I meant that I would gladly serve you," said the poor man, shivering more violently; "but don't—don't ask me to do anything wrong—I can't do that!"

"Yours is a very tender conscience!" exclaimed Arnold, rudely, rising to his feet with a quick flash of passion, which the least breath of opposition always excited in him. "I suppose you think it is enough to have your own short comings to reflect upon——"

"Have mercy, Arnold!" pleaded the clergyman. "Don't talk to me in that tone—I have suffered enough, surely, I have."

"Then reserve your preaching for your pulpit—I wish none of it, remember that, Osborne."

The clergyman made an appealing gesture, as if imploring the tyrannical man to spare him farther insult. There was so much weakness in it that another would have had pity: but Arnold did not even know the meaning of the word.

"You are coming to your senses," he said; "I am glad of it."

"I don't know," replied Osborne, shaking his head sadly. "Sometimes it seems to me that I am losing them—it would be no wonder if I did—no wonder."

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Arnold, with a sharp laugh; "to hear the fellow talk, one would think that he was Cain, the first murderer! Are you sure that you are not the Wandering Jew?"

"Don't make a jest of me, Benedict—have a little mercy!"

"There, there!" said Arnold, carelessly, as one might quiet a pet gray-hound. "Be quiet now—be quiet!"

"Yes, yes! And what did you wish, Ben?—the name sounds like old times, doesn't it?"

It seemed as if the clergyman was trying to soften the stern man before him. He wished, perhaps, to call up some memory of their youth to restrain the wicked counsel which he felt to be in his heart. But there was nothing holy to Benedict Arnold—no memory that he held sacred. To a man like that, what appeal was possible?

"Do you remember that foolish business of mine about a year ago—more perhaps?"

"What do you mean?"

"Why, the time I came to you with that pretty girl—you know there was some sort of a form——"

"Why, Arnold, I married you to that girl—solemnly married you before the most high God. She was a sweet creature, and should have had a holy influence over you."

Arnold sprang toward him, clutched his arm in a fierce grasp, whispering,

"Repeat those words again, and before to-morrow noon you shall be an outcast—not a roof to shelter—not a friend to aid you."

Harvey Osborne sank back upon the log and groaned aloud—the depth of degradation to which he had fallen was terrible indeed.

"What do you mean?" he gasped. "You try me too far, Arnold!"

"No matter! This is what I mean—you did not marry me to that girl!"

"The ceremony was sacred as any I ever performed!" exclaimed Osborne, firmly. "Before God and man, you are husband and wife."

"Fool! Do you wish to ruin yourself?"

"I do not care! Oh! I am tired of this load of sin—this weight of concealment! Betray me—tell the whole world what a wretch I am—I don't care—I don't care!"

"Bah! If it came to the point you would see that it was not so pleasant! But I'll do it, Osborne, I will, by——"

"Stop!" said the minister. "You shall not take God's name sacrilegiously before me, unworthy as I am."

"Nonsense! But will you come to your senses and let me explain?"

"Yes, yes, explain—do!"

"I don't ask anything very terrible! I have reasons for not wishing the circumstances known about that little affair——"

"But, Arnold, it was a marriage—a real marriage! Her name was—Hannah, yes, Hannah Arnold! It could not be broken or evaded—I am a minister, an ordained minister of the gospel."

"And a pretty one, truly!" cried Arnold, roused to a tiger-like fury. "A fine minister of the gospel are you—a cheat—a scoundrel—a gambler!"

"Spare me, Ben, spare me!"

"Don't hope it! The whole world shall know your real character! I will denounce you in your own church—a pretty scandal it will make! Why they'll drive you out of the town—ha, my young minister, what do you say now?"

"Oh! my God!" groaned the wretched man, "my God, have mercy on me, for this man will show me none."

"None!" repeated Arnold. "I shall tell your flock what a pastor they have! You went to a gambling-house in New York, in my company, remember. True, you had taken too much at supper before that—a double crime!"

"But it was not my fault," Osborne cried, goaded into self-defence. "I did not know that it was liquor you gave me—you called it cordial—it drove me mad for the time, and you did what you chose with me."

"No doubt, oh! no doubt; but make people believe that, will you?—only try, that's all! See here, Osborne, I have been a good friend, I shall make a bitter enemy! You don't know how I can hate—avenge myself I will! A little will not satisfy me—I shall follow you—wherever you hide yourself I shall find you out—I will tell this story—blast your whole life—make you the wretchedest criminal that ever trod the earth."

A groan was the only response he received—his agonized listener had no power to speak.

"More than that—I will put you in prison! I hold your note for the money I advanced to settle your gaming debt; you can't pay it, nobody will do it for you; I will put you in the debtors' jail before to-morrow night. Now then, what do you say?"

"Nothing will soften you?—nothing will change your fiendish purpose?"

"Yes—it is easily done! Only forget that marriage, as you call it——"

"I cannot lie——"

"What else is your whole life, you miserable fool?"

"True, true! Oh! surely I have suffered enough. Do not torture me farther—do not push me lower into this pit of infamy and guilt!"

"Why you talk like a play-actor! Promise what I ask, and I will return you the note—you will be safe then."

The minister was silent—a great struggle was going on in his soul, and he was weak.

"It does no one any harm," continued Arnold; "the girl is safe enough. Some time I shall acknowledge her, but I cannot now. Promise, promise!"

"What, tell me what?"

"Never to reveal this marriage. Swear it!"

"But if she comes to me herself?"

"Tell her she is mistaken——"

"And destroy my own soul?"

"Let your soul take care of yourself! Once more, will you help me?"

"I cannot tell a lie—I will not!"

"But are you willing to assist me?"

"I must, you know I must!"

"Then go away from here! Your health is poor—you need change. A ship will soon sail for the West Indies, if you will go in her, I will pay your passage and give you plenty of money besides. Your people will spare you for a little time if you plead to them with that pale face."

"But what will become of this poor girl?"

"I tell you she is safe enough! Think of yourself! I offer you safety or disgrace—choose!"

"Oh! this is a temptation of the demon!"

"Think of it! Before to-morrow night you will be hooted at as you walk the streets—mobbed, insulted by the very boys you have taught."

"You will drive me mad, Arnold!"

"Will you go away? Do you promise?"

"I do—I do!"

He fell upon the ground, wringing his hands, and weeping like a child; while Arnold stood over him with a fiendish smile.

"Swear by your hope of salvation that you will be silent!"

"I swear! God have mercy upon me, I swear!"

He fell forward again, and after another terrible groan there was a long silence, more fearful than the agony which had gone before.

All night long Laura lay upon her bed, counting the hours with feverish impatience, gazing drearily out upon the moonlight, and weeping, at times, till the curtains overhead trembled with the violence of her sobs. All the pretty wiles, that had seemed but a harmless means of securing Arnold's love, now rose before her tortured imagination as coarse and unwomanly artifice which had only repulsed him. Her beauty, of which she had been so proud, was, in that hour of humiliation, a source of annoyance. What was it worth, if the only heart she cared to own in the wide world turned from that beauty with indifference? Nay, was she indeed beautiful? Not in the style which he had been taught to admire—not like the fair blonde who had rescued her from death; compared to her that creamy complexion, and hair as black and brighter than the neck of a raven, was, in her over-trained imagination, over-rich to coarseness. And her eyes, so large and bright, how could any man admire them who had once looked on the soft, violet orbs of Amy Leonard? Yes, that was beauty. What right had she to expect homage to charms so unlike and even so inferior? Thus the proud girl—proud in the excess of her humility—spent the long, harassing night. The moonbeams of the

evening made her weep and turn away from their brightness. The storm, which broke and dashed over the town toward morning, appealed more directly to her passionate sorrow. When she heard the first howl of the tempest, her courage rose, and she was filled with a bitter wish to go out and battle with the storm. The fever in her blood was so hot, the thirst for action so pressing, that she could stand the quiet of her bed no longer.

Laura threw back the curtains and stepped forth into the darkness. Her dress had been loosened, but not taken off, and the top of her high-heeled shoes was lost in the beating of the rain, as she walked up and down the chamber, angry now, and flushed with resentment for the wrong that had fallen on her—that wrong which no law can reach, and of which wrong a haughty woman dies, calling it by any name the doctors in their wisdom may choose.

The chamber was large, but, in her fever, the air seemed close and insufficient. She flung open the sash, gasping for breath. In rushed the storm, dashing coldly against her face and bosom. She received it with a sense of relief. Her hot cheeks grew cooler as the rain beat against them. Her excitement rose with keen sympathy, and met the storm half way. What did she care that the rich braids that crowned her head were getting heavy with moisture, or that the knots of ribbon, that had fluttered so gayly on her dress a few hours before, were dangling, like wilted flowers, on the wet silk of her skirt? The storm in her soul was replied to by the storm without. She felt like a wild bird drifting madly with the tempest—a poor white gull, who had been lured far, far out to sea, and must now brave the elements alone.

The old elm tree seemed maddened like herself: its branches raved and tossed themselves up and down, to and fro, playing with the lightning, and flinging great masses of leaves upon the wind, as it rushed by.

To Laura the old tree seemed human, and suffering with pain as she was. The creaking of the sign on its rusty hinges struck her like a cry of anguish—the very cry that she, in her pride, was strangling in the depths of her bosom.

How bravely the old tree bore itself! With what lofty grandeur it shook off the lightning and the rain! How fiercely its branches thrashed the roof, and knocked against the verandahs, scattering torn leaves upon the floor, where the rain beat them down, as the world deals with fallen beauty.

The window where Laura stood opened on the

upper verandah, which was now a blaze of lightning; now enveloped with darkness. The sash was broad and deep; she flung it wide open, and sprang out on the wet floor. Here was room to breathe—here the wind raved and rioted, as pride and sorrow battled in her own soul.

She walked up and down the long gallery, sobbing faint echoes to the deeper sigh of the storm. Sometimes faint cries broke from her lips—those cries which she had stifled in her room, from fear of being heard; but as these expressions of grief left her heart, the wind tossed them out into the storm, shouting over them, as coarse humanity might have done, had it been able to seize upon her sorrow and drag it into the fuller knowledge. She thought of this, and triumphed over her powers of concealment. She would have no confidant but the storm, not even her brother should guess how her pride had been crushed—how her poor heart bled. As for Arnold, he must never know of her humiliation. She would meet him again on the morrow with a pride that should more than match his indifference. Yes, she would stay some weeks in the town, receiving, graciously, the homage of those admirers who had been so recklessly cast aside during her infatuation. He should see how men could adore her, and be grateful for one of the smiles which he had not cared to gather. Certainly she would stay a few weeks, gather a harvest of admiration, and then go away. Go away! Where? and how?

The blank that followed this question fell like a pall on her heart. Without love where can a woman go and not find a desert? She ceased to walk, as the desolating idea crept over her, and stood leaning against a pillar of the verandah, pale, drenched, and hopeless. Body and soul, she was chilled through and through.

"Laura!"

A cry died in her throat; her heavy eyes filled with wild brilliancy, for the lightning playing among the branches of the elm revealed Benedict Arnold. He stood directly before her against the yawning space of an open window, through which he had just passed, having seen her standing there, alone, amidst the gleams of lightning.

"Laura, my beloved, why are you out in a night like this? You are tempting death."

She looked at him with her wild eyes; her lips trembled apart, but she could not utter a word, speech seemed chained down in her bosom.

"What is the matter?" he said, more gently

than she had ever heard him speak before. "I went to your parlor, late in the evening, and found it empty. The landlady told me you had gone to bed ill. The thought was enough to keep me awake; and the storm brought me to the window where I saw you thus."

Laura wound her arms around the pillar, for the thrill that ran through every fibre of her frame made her faint.

"And you sought me? You came to my room? You——"

"Yes, I went there," he said, gently unwinding her arm from its clasp around the pillar, and, drawing her suddenly into his embrace, "and this was what I was panting to say, Laura, Laura de Montreuil, will you be my wife?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## THE DREAM OF A LIFE TIME FULFILLED.

BY MRS. B. FRANK ENOS.

It was a very little figure, very little and slight indeed, but it was quite enough to make Hugh Hamilton look away into the cool shadows of the green orchard over the way, that sunny May afternoon, and dream such dreams as only come to a man once in his whole life time.

It seemed very foolish, extremely foolish, and so he thought himself, for a man of *his* age and experience in life, to be wasting all the long, bright hours of that May day afternoon, watching for the little "airy, fairy Lillian" that daily passed that office; but, turn his back as often as he would to the open window, his eyes constantly wandered to the square of sunshine that lay so indolently on the uncarpeted floor, for it was fast nearing the hour when a little shadow fell there, and he vowed that he would see *that*, even if his conscience did reprove him for gazing so admiringly at the substance thereof.

The academy bell had rung full a half hour before, and she never was *known* to be so late as on this very afternoon; and Hugh Hamilton sat like a martyr, gazing at the floor until his patience was clean exhausted.

Just then came the echo of laughter, and a very sweet voice said, "Just down to the old beech tree, girls, you *will* go as far as that with me, it is so *very* pleasant," and the little voice said it so coaxingly, that Hugh Hamilton could not, for his very life, resist the temptation of looking out.

"Of course, Gracie, I knew you would say that: at first it was only to the corner, then to the orchard, and *now* down to the old beech-nut. I suppose——" but that was all that floated in to Hugh Hamilton's ears, and it was left to his imagination to finish the supposition that that tall, dark-browed school girl had commenced: but he did not take the trouble to do so, for what cared he what she "supposed?"—it was full enough that he had learned the name of his little divinity, "Grace." Oh! how beautiful she was, with her sweet, sunny face dimpling with laughter, while the sunshine burnished all those tangled curls like gold. The broad-brimmed hat hung around her neck in a careless way, that Hugh Hamilton would have reprov'd in a sister, if he had ever had one; but the witching grace of this little creature

made everything she did look charming, even to the clasping of her load of books by a pair of little dimpled hands entirely innocent of gloves.

Oh! Hugh Hamilton, where now is all your pride and fastidiousness, sitting there while the sun goes down behind the old apple trees in the orchard over the way, heeding not the soft wind that comes drifting over, laden with the sweet fragrance of their pale pink blossoms?

Hugh Hamilton was a bachelor, and a lawyer. Five years before, he had closed his office in a large and flourishing city, and registered his name on one of the Atlantic steamers outward bound from his native land.

Some said that Hugh Hamilton was on the eve of bankruptcy, and must needs come down in his luxurious style of living, or retire, for a time, from public view to retrieve his scattered fortune. Others hinted that there was some love affair connected with his sudden disappearance, and not a few believed that the engagement that just at that time became public, of the proud and haughty Anna Danforth with that millionaire from the South, was the *true* cause of Hugh Hamilton's departure.

But whatever it was no one was the wiser, for he only parted his lips and showed just the least little flash of his very white teeth, when any one hinted at the reason of his going abroad: and before all his dear five hundred friends could be made to believe that he was going—he had *gone*.

Just five years after, Hugh Hamilton turned the key in the rusty lock of his office door, and went in amid the dust and accumulated cobwebs, turned over the leather cushion in his great office chair, drew up one of the blinds at the window, and sat down. It were needless to say that he felt desolate indeed, for it was long past office hours, and the long halls that echoed with busy feet and busier tongues, all the long day, were silent and deserted now, so Hugh Hamilton sat down alone and looked back over his life.

Once more he lived in the little brown house nestled among the green hills of New England, and memory showed him two graves over which his manhood had erected a monument, whereon was simply written, "Father," "Mother." Hugh Hamilton's eyes were moist as he thought of

those he loved, lying cold in the grave, and his proud heart yearned now, in its loneliness, for some one to love and to love him.

His parents had died poor, and Hugh, their only child, was adopted by a neighboring farmer, and for several years he lived a cold, morose, uncomplaining child. On the night of his tenth birthday, Hugh Hamilton tied up a little package containing all his earthly possessions, and turned his back upon the home of his childhood.

Ten years afterward, he stood beside the green graves in the little church-yard, and superintended the erection of a monument over those he loved. It was not until he had gone away again, that the villagers knew that little Hugh Hamilton had been among them; and many an old woman would go, in the long summer evenings, and gaze wonderingly at the white shaft that grew up so mysteriously in their little unostentatious burial-place, and say to themselves, "I knew it, I *always* said Hughie Hamilton would be a gentleman yet, even if he *did* run away from old farmer Blakeley: it's a pity he's not alive to see this day."

Hugh Hamilton's memory dwelt lightly on all the years of poverty that he had known; indeed, he scarcely owned to himself how many struggles he had passed through to obtain his education, or how many sleepless nights he had spent poring over the ponderous treatises of law, when he was only a copying clerk in the employ of Barret & Brace. No, proud heart! he dropped all those dark passages out from his book of life, and dwelt lingeringly, lovingly upon that brightest morning of his existence, when the members of this firm offered him the junior partnership in their office, because of his extreme faithfulness since he had been in their employ.

From that hour, Hugh Hamilton's star had been in the ascendant. Two years after, old Mr. Brace retired from business on account of ill-health; and several months after died, and was buried beneath the blue waves of the Mediterranean, whither he was cruising in hopes of regaining his health. He was a widower, and childless, so to Hugh Hamilton he bequeathed fifteen thousand dollars, and his immense law library, which, to an ambitious young beginner in life, was a fortune in itself.

Again Hugh Hamilton turned away from the scenes of his early struggles in life, and, at the age of thirty, finds himself firmly established in a large and flourishing Western city, a man looked up to by all classes of society, a lawyer whose reputation had gone far and wide—so he

brushes back the dark clustering hair from his fine forehead, lights his second cigar, tips back his chair and elevates his feet upon the green baize covered table, and says, with just the slightest curve of his black moustache, "It's all right now, Hugh, my boy, we're ahead."

It was on this night that Hugh Hamilton made up his mind to go to Europe. He knew himself to be the "bright, particular star" of the society in which he moved, the great "catch" that many a "mamma" had manoeuvred to ensnare for the last five years. He had escaped heart-whole, however, season after season, although the battery of bright eyes, through which he had passed, was enough to have completely riddled any heart just a shade less adamant than Hugh Hamilton's.

No wonder he was voted an "iceberg," a "hard-hearted," "unlovable" man; yet even while the red lip uttered this malediction, the owners would have given full half of the shining ringlets that they shook so defiantly, if Hugh Hamilton had only been a little more come-at-able.

But he never showed any preferences, this "unlovable" man, as he danced and laughed, night after night, with all the marriageable *belles* of his acquaintance; and, if one chanced to lean rather heavily upon his arm in the conservatory, or look unutterable things in some ill-lighted corner, while she playfully tapped him with her fan and called him a "naughty creature," he straightway opened his great black eyes to their utmost extent, and immediately conveyed the fair flatterer back to her mamma with an air that seemed to say, "You have forgotten yourself, my dear child—excuse me."

At last came Anna Danforth, haughty, piquant Anna Danforth, prouder than ten Hugh Hamiltons put together; and then the world said, "He's caught at last."

It was true he admired the proud beauty, and, sometimes in the lonely solitude of his bachelor abode, he drew shining little pictures of a beautiful home where Anna Danforth reigned queen, and he her most loyal subject.

But it was only a passing fancy; and so the months flew by, and the fair *belle* saw herself no nearer the "innermost" in Hugh Hamilton's heart, than she was the first day she flashed her bright black eyes up to him, and vowed to conquer him in spite of his pride.

It was rather humiliating to confess her failure, even to herself; so to let him know that she did not care for him, nor ever had, she became the promised wife of a wealthy



Southerner, and amid her splendid bridal preparations strove to forget that Hugh Hamilton existed.

Hugh heard of the engagement with a little spark of malice in his heart; just enough to prompt the question, "Does she love him?" and being assured that the bridegroom elect had presented his fair *piancée* with a set of diamonds of fabulous splendor, he said, "To be sure she does," while a wicked little smile strove to be seen, but was effectually lost in the dark ambush of his moustache.

So he concluded to go to Europe. He was rich and perfectly able to close his office, and take a little pleasure at last after so many years of labor: and it had been one of the many dreams of his life to travel in the old world.

Five years fled rapidly away. Under the sunny skies of Italy; amid the gayeties of Paris, that whirlpool of Europe; up and down the flowing Rhine; now floating lazily along in a gondola through the sparkling streets of "beautiful Venice;" and then supping with the monks of St. Bernard under the mighty shadows of the cloud-capped Alps.

But it was over at last, and never was there a sadder heart than Hugh Hamilton carried that night as he sat in the loneliness of his long deserted office.

Here was his home—here all that the world held dear to him, and how desolate it all was! His heart shrunk from entering society again on the old heartless footing of years gone by, because he felt that it was all false, for underneath the cold exterior that Hugh Hamilton always wore, beat a heart as warm and loving as any woman's. Oh! for a home—oh! for warm hearts to welcome him for what he was, a good and noble *man*! this was the burden of his weary dream, as hour after hour of that lonely night went on.

"I wish I had accepted Ned's invitation," he thought, at last, as the memory of an old familiar face flitted before him.

Ned Leonard and Hugh Hamilton had been college chums, and had not met for years until the day before they had rode together on the cars some two hundred miles, and renewed all the old friendship of long ago. Ned was married now, and discoursed so eloquently of Caddy and the children, and gave him such a pressing invitation to go home with him then and there, that Hugh Hamilton could scarcely resist: and now he was wishing that he had gone.

He takes a card from his case and reads, "Dr. Ned Leonard, Glenacre;" and he looks at his watch, finds that it is already morning, so

he goes out and locks the door after him; and not one of his old friends sitting in their offices next door that day, dream that the absentee kept a weary watch there all through the long and silent night just past.

That was the way that Hugh Hamilton came to Glenacre, because he was tired of the world at large, and of himself in particular. It was enough to effectually rouse any dormant energies just to hear Ned Leonard's welcome, and to see him shake up the babies and introduce them, one after another, to the number of eight or nine, that first evening of his arrival.

That night, as Hugh Hamilton laid his head down upon the daintily frilled pillows in Mrs. Ned Leonard's best chamber, he voted that little lady a "wife among a million;" and Ned the "happiest dog in existence."

How happily the days flew away! Hugh Hamilton hunted and fished, lounged away the hours in Ned's office, or read to Caddy while she made the most endless number of pinafores that ever fell to the lot of mortal woman to make before.

It was in this same office of Ned Leonard's that Hugh Hamilton met his destiny.

Sitting there one day, after Ned had gone out on a round of professional visits, deep in one of his olden time dreams, thinking of all that Ned had been telling him, how he had wooed and won Caddy Raymond years before, Hugh Hamilton saw passing before his window the brightest little fairy that eyes ever beheld.

It was strange for one that had dwelt among the dark-eyed daughters of Italy, and the beautiful of every land, to see in such a wee child as this something to love; but so it was.

Day after day, Hugh Hamilton learned to watch for that little flitting figure that went so thoughtlessly up and down, reading aloud, or singing to herself as she went, careless as any bird by the wayside, sometimes swinging her hat by one string as she tripped along, and sometimes hanging it on her arm, while her nimble fingers wrote out some of the exercises for next day's lesson.

Hugh Hamilton would have died sooner than ask Ned Leonard who she was; for he was such an incorrigible torment, there was no knowing what he might do; so he watched and waited.

That she was one of the school girls he already knew, and that her name was "Grace" he had just found out; and so, when he sat down to tea that evening, after having kept it waiting full an hour, he set Ned Leonard off into a fit of laughter that was really dangerous to behold, by calling Caddy "Grace" two or three times,

and then blushing like any girl because Ned laughed at him.

The next evening, Hugh Hamilton's divinity came alone on her homeward way, studiously reading along, and, being very much pre-occupied, she did not observe that she had dropped one of her books, until a very musical voice said just behind her, "Miss Lee, allow me to return your property, you dropped this a moment ago." Thanks to the fly-leaf, whereon was written the owner's name, and to the finder's presence of mind, that tempted him to glance therein and read it.

Grace Lee looked wonderingly up into the dark eyes looking so eagerly down upon her, and, with just the brightest little flash of crimson flitting over her face, she hastily thanked him, and reached out her hand for her book. In doing this, she dropped another, which they both stooped to pick up, and just then a wicked little breeze blew the young lady's curls directly across Hugh Hamilton's eyes, so he picked up Grace Lee's hand instead of the book, which deepened the crimson in her cheeks into such a rosy blood, that it was really painful to behold.

Of course, Mr. Hamilton could tender but a very lame apology for *such* an awkward proceeding, so he laughingly bade her give him all her books, which he would carry, as his walk led him in that direction, and thus prevent any more being lost by the way.

Grace Lee gave them up to him without any demur, looking so frightened and shy all the time, that Hugh Hamilton was every moment afraid that she would flit away and leave him, books and all.

At the gate of a charming little white cottage Grace Lee said, "Thank you," and received her books and a card, on which was engraved "Hugh Hamilton," and with the rosy glow rushing up again, even to the white forehead, she nodded another "good night," and flitted up the garden walk.

The next night Hugh Hamilton carried Grace Lee's books to the cottage gate, and the next—and every night through all the week; and when Saturday and Sunday came, and no little flitting figure going up or coming down, Hugh felt more melancholy than ever.

The next week Mr. Hamilton went so far as to ask to be admitted into the charmed enclosure of the cottage garden; and then the blushing Grace bethought herself how rude she had been never to invite the gentleman in, so she apologized, and Mr. Hamilton was duly installed a guest in the little white cottage. After that, Hugh Hamilton always went in to rest, after the

taugue or his long walk, and, unaided Mrs. Lee a lady of more than common hospitality, occasionally stayed to tea without the preliminaries of a *very* urgent invitation.

"There is a casket that contains a rare jewel, Hugh," said Ned Leonard, one day, as he and Mr. Hamilton were riding out past the little white cottage.

"Ah!" said Hugh, "who is it?" in the most matter-of-courseish manner imaginable.

"Her name is Grace Lee; her mother is a widow, and they are quite poor, having nothing but this little place, so Grace is at present fitting herself for a governess, or something of that sort, expecting, no doubt, to make a fortune in a year or two and retire."

"A governess—that little, slight child a *governess*; why she's not equal to it," spoke Hugh Hamilton, entirely forgetting that he was not suspected of being an acquaintance of Miss Lee.

"Slight *child*!" mocked Ned Leonard, giving Hugh a glance out of the corner of his eye; "you know little Grace then, eh?"

Hugh was obliged now to tell that he did have the honor to be slightly acquainted, "only an accidental affair, you know, Ned."

"And so you are going to be a governess, are you, little Grace?" said Hugh Hamilton, as he sat in the cosy little sitting-room, one evening, some six weeks after his conversation with Ned Leonard.

"I hope to be, Mr. Hamilton," answered Grace, looking up from the paper, whereon she had **been** copying a sketch furnished by that gentleman. "Why, don't you think I will make a good one?"

"Oh! yes, good enough," answered Hugh, looking down into the little upturned face gazing so anxiously into his.

Hugh Hamilton had always thought Grace Lee beautiful, but never before had he seen her so exquisitely lovely as she looked then, with her bright curls drawn away from her white forehead, and the dark-brown eyes raised so appealingly to his. The full red lips were just the least bit parted, showing a gleam of the pearly teeth within, and the little dimpled hands folded one over the other, while she waited for his reply.

"You say 'yes,' just as though you did not *mean* it," she said, and the brown eyes went down upon the paper, and the heavily-fringed lids lay lovingly upon the crimson cheeks, while the little fingers toyed idly with her pencil, and the voice sounded as though it were full of tears.

It was full five minutes before Hugh Hamilton

could trust himself to speak, and then he said, "I do mean it, Grace, but I was thinking that it was a thankless task for such a child as you to undertake."

"I am no *child*, Mr. Hamilton." The voice was steady enough now, and there was a willful sparkle in the bright eyes, and a pretty curl in the little red lip, that gave Hugh quite a new insight into the character of this fair student.

"I may be *childish*—I presume *you* think I am—but when I am in earnest, I am as much a woman as—as—as anybody."

At this, Grace Lee flashed such a withering glance at Mr. Hamilton, that it was the greatest wonder in the world that he was not immediately annihilated.

He was leaning indolently back on the sofa, with his elbow resting upon the arm, and looking down upon the excited little speaker, while just the least shadow of a smile lurked around the corners of his mouth.

Grace noticed the smile, and instead of provoking her still more, it scattered all her anger in one moment, and with it all the cherished dreams of the last two years, and over face and neck went the crimson tide again, and two large burning tears rolled slowly down the blushing cheeks, and then she bowed down her head upon her folded arms and sobbed in earnest.

Hugh Hamilton sat perfectly still. His face might have been a shade or two paler than usual, and there certainly was a mistiness in those dark eyes that years had not seen there before, but he scorned to acknowledge it by brushing it away; for what had a man to do with tears, standing, as he was then, on the threshold of a new existence? In a moment, the void that had already made Hugh Hamilton's heart desolate was filled to overflowing, and he trembled now at the very extent of his bliss, and feared to move lest the sweet spell should be broken, and all this new-found happiness drift away beyond his reach.

The shadows deepened in the corners of the room, the crimson and golden splendors of the western sky had faded out into a dull gray, and still the bowed head rested upon the folded arms, and over all fell the long, bright tresses of her golden hair.

"Grace!" Hugh Hamilton scarcely knew the sound of his own voice breaking up the stillness of the room that had been silent so long, for that man had lived years in the last half hour.

"Grace, come to me."

Still the little head bowed down, and she made no sign of having heard him.

"Grace, *won't* you come?"

Whether it was the strange sound of his voice that said this so pleadingly, or what invisible power persuaded her, Grace Lee raised her head, pushed back the tangled hair from her hot face, and went over to the sofa.

"My darling, *mine* at last!" and Hugh Hamilton's arms were folded over, and warm tears falling upon the sweet face resting upon his bosom.

Then followed the story of a long life—lonely and unloved, and Hugh Hamilton pictured the desolation that would always be his, unless this bright, new-found star shone on his pathway henceforth and forever.

Grace Lee listened to it all as one in a dream, and when he had finished he said, "Now, Grace, which shall it be? Will you be my wife, or a—governess?"

Grace Lee felt the hand clasping hers grow tighter and tighter as he waited for her answer, still for her very life she could not have spoken it. Slowly he relaxed his clasp, and such a look of utter wretchedness swept over his face, and Grace Lee caught it as she raised her eyes to his, then softly the white arms were folded around his neck, and a light kiss left burning on his forehead—and that was his answer.

Oh! how gently the night wind parted the white curtains around Grace Lee's couch that night!—how softly the bright stars peeped in at the little window, while the pale moonlight just kissed the white hands folded so meekly over the fluttering heart!

A beautiful dream that Grace Lee had always dreamed, as being afar off in the distant future, had been realized that night; and though she had told it all over, sitting with her blushing face buried in her mother's lap, still she could not believe it. "Hugh Hamilton, the greatest, the noblest of men, loving her!" And so sleep had stolen in upon her, and down through a bright vista of rosy dreams floats Grace Lee, this first night of her betrothal.

Two weeks after, Hugh Hamilton was duly reported as having returned from his travels, and old friends and acquaintances came flocking around him eager to welcome him home.

Every one pronounced him vastly improved, and indeed he could scarcely be recognized as the Hugh Hamilton of other days.

There was a look of tranquil peace forever shining in his face now, so different from the cold, gloomy, proud reserve that had always enveloped him as with a mantle; for the one want of that great, noble heart was satisfied at last, and he was going no longer life's journey alone.

Thus sped on another year, broken only by little snatches of happiness, found under the roof of the little white cottage in Glenacre, when suddenly Hugh Hamilton electrified his friends and acquaintances by purchasing an elegant mansion on one of the most fashionable squares in town, and having it furnished in the most magnificent style.

There were rumors of fabulous splendors seen there, whole boxes of foreign treasures arriving every day, and going into the charmed house as if by magic.

Anna Danforth, now the disconsolate widow De Vere, brushed two more little curls out from under her widow's cap, and showed signs of getting a little better of her great grief in the general excitement, and actually was seen passing Mr. Hamilton's house with her veil thrown back from her face.

It was the month of roses, sweet smiling June, the queen month of the year. On one of its brightest days Glenacre was all astir, for it was to be the wedding day of Grace Lee.

The Rev. Herbert Gray performed the ceremony, and Dr. Ned Leonard gave away the bride, and, amid the tears and congratulations of the village assembly, Hugh Hamilton bore away his youthful wife.

"It is a shame—a perfect scandal to bring such a child as that here, and set her up as first and foremost," went from one lip to another, the first time Mrs. Hugh Hamilton

made her appearance in public in her new home.

"A mere school-girl," echoed one belle to another, whose school days were so far back in the "long ago," that she could scarcely remember them herself.

"A poor little golden-haired doll-baby!" groaned Mrs. De Vere, as she brushed all the little dark curls back under her cap again, and talked of "darling Gustavus" from behind a cambric handkerchief, with a black border full three inches deep.

But Grace Hamilton knew nothing of all this in her innocent, happy-heartedness; and when all Hugh's friends came to see her she was delighted with them all, and with none more than the lovely young widow, who talked by the hour of her great sorrow, until Grace was ready to go distracted out of pure sympathy.

Years have gone by since Grace Lee's glancing shadow first fell across Hugh Hamilton's pathway. She is the same little fairy Grace to-day that she was years ago, although she has reigned two seasons in Washington, the acknowledged queen of beauty, as Mrs. Senator Hamilton.

Every summer finds them established at the little white cottage in Glenacre, and then goes on the warfare that is always being waged between Hugh and Ned Leonard, regarding the respective merits of the only two angels under the sun—Caddy and Grace.

## THE BURNHAMS OF BOSCAWEN PLAIN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUSY L——'S DIARY."

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860, by Charles J. Peterson, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 374.

### CHAPTER XXXVII.

*October 29th.*

Mrs. MAYFIELD and I were out last evening walking, in the alleys, when we heard a voice behind us calling out with a joyful inflexion, "May—here I am, May!" heard quick steps crunching the gravel; and, in a moment, Mrs. Mayfield was crying, her husband's arm about her, her head on his shoulder.

"Our little darling is gone!" said she, as soon as she could speak, looking up into her husband's face, wiping her tears and trying to control the working of her features. His pain showed itself in his bent head, contracted brow and shrinking form. He did not speak until with tolerable calmness he could say, "But you are better?"

"Oh! a great deal better!" brightening. "I am like another creature! the world is like another world, for God is in it! That is, I have found Him. He has always been in it, but I have just found Him. I know now all about what it means—finding God. I never knew anything about it before. Excuse me, dear," turning with affectionate eyes to me, "this is my very dear friend, Miss Burnham, George; my husband, Miss Burnham. I am glad to introduce you."

He had just fixed his friendly, observant eyes on mine, and given me his hand, when he saw his brother alighting at the gate. He hurried to meet him, and Mrs. Mayfield followed. I heard the glad outbreak of brotherly greeting, heard Mrs. Mayfield's voice chiming in. One moment, it brought tears of sympathy to my eyes, the next my heart sank and ached. I came into the house, and up to my chamber with it sinking and aching more and more at every step.

*The 30th.*

Mrs. Hammond, Rose, and Donna started early this morning for the town, where a brother of Mrs. Hammond's was to meet them, and carry them out to his family and farm at East Hampton. He has troops of animals, ducks, Guinea hens, peacocks, colts, and parrots; it was for these that Rose wanted to go.

I went down with them to an early breakfast, and saw nothing of the Mayfields, until, after they had breakfasted, Mrs. Mayfield came to my room to ask me if I would go to Headley with them to spend the day.

I could not go, I said, it was so cold and raw, so cloudy, and—

So cloudy? Oh! would I just come to the window and see how the clouds were all going, with what a golden light the sun was beginning to shine? She took me to the window with her arms about me; and her arms were so warm; they warmed me and did me good; and all along they have been so cold! she has been so cold! Love, I see, is the vivifier. I do not wonder that the unloved and lonely grow so blue and thin, so cold! that we see them shivering from head to foot, when we, if we are beloved and cherished, if we love and cherish, are all aglow.

*I could go!* she plead, she knew I would!

No, really I could not. My head ached. I was cold. Her arms had warmed me a little; but I dreaded going into the chilly morning air. I must sit there in the sunshine and get warm. She was kind; I thanked her, but I longed for a quiet day at home; so good morning, dear; for, declining, thanking, praising the warm, soft arms, I had accompanied her to my chamber door; and there, with kisses, with regrets on her part, with a little relief, followed by loneliness and sinking on mine, we parted. And here all day I have by turns sat and walked, filled with complaint and fear. God forgive me the weakness and miserable selfishness of this day! God help me, after this day, to be patient, to bear with an equal mind whatever He sends; for, if I am not patient, if I cannot bear, then, in my impatience, my want of equanimity and strength, is it seen that I am unworthy as yet of any great blessedness in my human relations or my divine; that there is a work before me for me to do in bringing my heart round, where it will know and feel that what comes into this short life is of little moment, if, throughout whatever comes, we stay close by God, so close, that not one of the so-called trials of life shall try us, and cause our hearts to sink, and ache,

and go into darkness, as mine has ached and sank and gone into darkness this day. God so help me! With many a hope and wish lying in thick uncertainty before me, still let me withdraw my eyes from the painful search after them, and go forward ready to meet in cheerful faith whatever comes to meet me; ready to take whatever burden is offered; for this, I know, there will not be one that I cannot bear with a serene, even with a thankful heart, if I accept it, trusting in God and loving Him as He bids me.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

*November 4th.*

WHEN I went down to dinner that day, I was surprised to see Mr. Mayfield standing thoughtfully at the side-light of the hall door, as if looking out upon the landscape. He turned when he heard my steps on the stairs and said, "I am glad to see you down to dinner; I was waiting to see if you came; you weren't well this morning."

"No; but I am better; my headache is gone."

He was glad, he said. He stopped me just outside the dining-room door to say, "I came home leaving my brother and his wife. I wanted to see you. I must see you to-day! Will you ride after dinner?"

I bowed assent. I could not easily have spoken; for by the head bent toward me, by the thrills his hand gave me, I knew what was coming, and my heart melted with thankfulness. He thanked me, let my hand go out of the agitated pressure of his, and I entered the dining-room, while he remained behind to give orders about the carriage. Warm was my heart when he came in and passed me, close to my chair, and went to his place. I could not eat. Luckily Mrs. Harrington and many of my near neighbors were gone into town, so that there was nobody to see how little I ate, nobody to speak to me to call my heart, one instant, away from its new, blest banquet of comfort. He left the table when I did, opened the door for me. He took my hand again in his, when we were on the landing, near my door. "Would I be ready soon?" he asked. "Would I let it be very soon?"

I would be ready in a few minutes, I told him; and he thanked me with far greater emotion, I am sure, than he would if I had given him ten worlds. Alack, why should he? This is what I asked him afterward, as we rode, after he had told me all his love for me, in some of the dearest, manliest words that ever came from mortal lips; and I, in a few agitated sentences,

had told him a little of mine for him. He said I did not know what I was—at least, to him, and had been ever since he met me at Boscawen Plain. Before his last summer's vacation, he wrote to my uncle, he said, to know how it was with me, whether I was free. I could conjecture, perhaps, what was the nature of my uncle's reply, but I could never guess what pain it cost him; for he had often believed that his thoughts would not so often revert to me, and dwell on me with such tenderness and warmth, if I did not, in my far-off home, sometimes think with a degree of interest of him. He went another way to spend his vacation, he added, after a pause; went out and boarded with an old couple, his parishioners, at their summer place among the Pennsylvania mountains. Then, he said, after his return, the condition of Mrs. Mayfield's health made it imperative that he should take her away, and he came here. When he saw me here, saw into what new dignity, clearness, and grace my being had developed itself, (these are his words, although it humbles me to write them,) when he felt what a warmth and joyful agitation my presence, the sight of me, the sound of my voice was to him, he could not tell whether his feeling was most of joy in my presence, or of despair that I could never, never on earth be his. He could never tell me, I could never know, what he had felt since he met me here.

I did know something about it, I said, when he paused a little; out of what I myself had felt, I knew something about it; and then, little by little, led on by the dear listening face, the softly, tenderly questioning lips, the gratitude he showed at every faltering confession, I told him all. When I was through, he gave me such tender thanks for telling him, praised me so tenderly, pitied Roosevelt so tenderly, that my eyes filled more than once, listening to him, and thinking that, with all his tenderness and excellence upon him, clothing him as a garment of light, he was mine forever.

We met in the evening and laid our plans. And so, we said, Rose would have a chance to "bring violets," and wipe the dust off the neglected metaphysicians. We talked of the comfort we would have, in being in the same home, day after day; of our life enlarging and exalting itself with our united experiences, with our sorrows and our joys. Each year, we said, as we went forward toward the grave, toward heaven, we would become dearer and dearer to each other, more deeply and truly one. But we must not forget God, we said, in loving each other, looking to each other; for, if we forget Him and

looked only to the earthly gift for our blessing, we would see the gift, as it were, turn to ashes in our hands, until, seeing our error, we came, with its discipline upon us, to Him, humbly praying Him to bless both our gift and us. Many marriages, as we believed, end in bitterness and disappointment, because persons entering that relation, seek less to put blessedness into it, than to get blessedness out of it.

It was settled that he should write the next morning to my father.

"What is it?" said Mrs. Harrington, the next morning, following me into my chamber when we went up from breakfast. "What has happened to you and Mr. Mayfield? There's a halo round you both this morning; isn't there, chit?" taking Rose's upturned chin into her hand.

Rose laughed and said she didn't know what halo meant.

"I'll tell you some time. What is it?" again turning to me, and holding my arms with both her hands. "If it is as I think, I shall absolutely cry for joy! Is it?"

When she knew the truth, her tears did gush out astream. "You don't catch me crying very often!" said she. "But there's something in this marriage, and I'm glad! I'm crying simply because I'm glad!"

When Rose understood, she danced, now and then taking me in the beautiful arms and calling me "Precious."

Mrs. Mayfield came in, her hand outstretched, her features glowing, her steps alert with gladness. She had just come from her husband and brother.

"Tush!" said Mrs. Harrington, starting. "I'm going to tell Mrs. Blanstone. I want to see what *she* will do."

She returned in a few minutes, and Mrs. Blanstone with her. Mrs. Blanstone has been a little disposed to overlook me, all along, because I was "only from New Ham'sher," was "only a farmer's daughter, after all," and "had nothing of the aristocracy about me, she could see, by the way I treated Mrs. Hammond and the waiters." This is what she has said of me to Mrs. Harrington, at one time and another. That morning, her small eyes, filled full of awe, were on me every moment. It was with considerable difficulty that she seated herself in the chair I offered; awe interrupted all her movements; every movement was an obeisance to me. Mrs. Mayfield was as nothing there where I was.

"Thank you, Miss Burnham; much obliged; you are very good, I'm sure," she said, when I asked her to be seated; and then she fixed her

eyes on me. She came to congratulate me, she said, clearing her throat. Mrs. Harrington had told her what had happened between Mr. Mayfield and me. I was to *be* congratulated. To be the wife of a clergyman like Mr. Mayfield—emphasizing Mayfield largely—in a place like Philadelphia—emphasizing Philadelphia and opening her little eyes wide—was to stand very high, *she* thought. Didn't Mrs. Harrington think so?"

"Not so much higher than she has stood all along, Mrs. Blanstone," replied Mrs. Harrington. "Boscawen Plain is a grand sort of place. Webster was born close by. He used to be there a great deal; his brother lived there, lies there now; and, to me, two such great, struggling, earnest lives, in a way, robe all the hills, woods, and the streets, and paths that they trod, with grandeur. I would go to Boscawen and Franklin, to be where they were in those early days of theirs, if for nothing else."

Mrs. Blanstone's eyes scanned me as if she saw some of the grandeur of their lives resting on me.

"*That's* something," pursued Mrs. Harrington, "to have lived in a beautiful place like Boscawen Plain. But, beyond this, Miss Burnham's family stands very high at Boscawen Plain. I know this, dear," seeing my upturned look—"from my friend, Mrs. Sears, of Concord. She knew that you were here, and wrote me about you. Her father is Esquire Burnham, Mrs. Blanstone; her grandfather was Hon. Mr. Burnham. Her father has lately married a very rich lady and an accomplished—sister, or sister-in-law, I forget which, to Mr. I forget who—late governor of New Jersey."

"Why!" now said Mrs. Blanstone. She seemed to shrink and shrivel in her proportions; her puffy hands lay limp in her narrow lap; she seemed not to know how to get along with so much greatness, with greatness so piled up. "I'd no idea of it!" she said, after awhile. "I wonder I didn't think of it, though; for Miss Burnham has a certain air, a——"

"Oh! poh!" cried Mrs. Harrington, "a 'certain air!' Pardon me, but I have no patience with such stuff! I think as much of good blood, of really *good* blood, as any one. Nobody thinks more of it than I do; more of real refinement and good breeding, than I do. I see you wonder at me. You will wonder more, perhaps, will wonder that I haven't more of this quality myself, when I tell you that not only my husband, but my father, and all the men in his immediate family, and in my mother's, are professional men; and that my father is one of the

wealthiest men in Lennox. He gave me the very best advantages to be had; still, I wonder how much of the 'certain air' you, any of you, have ever seen in me, or ever will? Ho! I am amused thinking of it! As for Miss Burnham, I doubt, from her family miniatures, if she gets her air from the Websters, or the governor of New Jersey, or even from her father, the Esquire, or her grandfather, the Honorable. She is like her mother, who was, Mrs. Sears says, an admirable woman, a woman beautifully endowed, naturally; but the daughter of a poor man. Her father lived and died a refined, intellectual, respectable, poor man."

"But!" interposed Mrs. Blanstone, drawing herself up, working her hands together, "I shall take Miss Burnham's part, now! I shan't let you tell these things now, when——"

"Poh! look in Miss Burnham's face and see what it is there; see if it is shame. The fact is, Mrs. Blanstone, you've got some of the narrowest, falsest, most unchristian notions in your head that ever got into a head yet. I shan't try to get them all out. I think this would take a great while. But I want to have you understand this, that Miss Burnham gets her air, her enviable organization from her maternal grandfather, who was so fond of beauty and so poor—*she* told me this," turning her eyes to mine—"that he planted all his trees and roses on the roadsides, for want of an inch of land of his own to plant them on. The result is, people are many a time surprised with beauty, shade, and fragrance in places where they were not looking for them. Tired travelers, travelers who are not tired, but who love beauty, sit in the shade, and, looking up into the trees, feel a property in them. Little children pull the roses; poor children, with bare legs, narrow, brown, homely frocks, and no roses at home; hardly anything at home, only an old cracked pitcher or bowl, to hold the water and the roses. Bless him! it grieves me that he is dead! I wouldn't turn my head to see the President of the United States; indeed I would not, unless he were a good man, as well as President; but such a man I would go a long way to see; and, when I got where he was, I would say out of my heart, 'Bless you, sir! I have come a long way to see you! bless you!' What do you suppose you would do, Mrs. Blanstone?"

"I? I don't know, I'm sure."

"*I don't know*; but I'm afraid you'd understand the air of poverty, and go by him with your head haughtily tipped and your skirts caught up, unless some one cheated you and told you he was *not* an honest, intelligent, poor

man, but a close, exacting, stingy miser, with heaps of dishonest gold. Then I'm afraid you'd look after him and admire him. Pardon me! but I am! pardon me for saying it; I can't help it, your notions are so little like what Christ's were. And he is not our Saviour, unless he is first our pattern. 'Follow me and be ye saved,' He said, not—'Follow me, or follow me not, as ye please; but, either way, be ye saved.' I've heard my minister say this, and I know it is the truth, and this is why I say it and feel it so often. But good-bye, now; good-bye, dear. I must go and write to my husband."

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

*The 5th.*

THEY went last Saturday morning. Friday evening my father's answer came—a tender, affecting letter, in which the law-giver lay by, and the man, the father spoke. He gave me to him, he said, and he gave him a treasure. There was not one in that house, there could not be one who knew me, who would not know that, in giving me to him, he gave him a treasure. God bless us both!

To me, he said that he was pleased with the connection I was to form. The Burnhams of Boscawen Plain had never yet done anything, or formed any connection to bring reproach upon the name. Roosevelt was a very good-hearted fellow, very wealthy, highly connected; but, on one account which he need not name, he was not sorry that he was coming into no more intimate relation toward me. And, my great-grandfather, my great-uncle and my uncle, one in each generation for three generations, had been clergymen. It was proper that I, who, as it were, represented the family in this generation, should marry as I am likely to. He was very well pleased.

My mother sent me a note blotted with her tears. What could she do without me? she said. Only, my father was dearer and dearer to her; she felt every day more at home and at rest there where he was. And I would have a good, long time at home before my marriage; a good many months, of course. I would need a good many months; for my outfit must be very full, very beautiful. She and my father both thought, that, under the circumstances, too much could not be done for me. I must have—but we will talk this over after I come. She had beautiful plans. Some of them, she thinks, will quite surprise me.

She and my father have been talking about the child, Rose, she says, and have come to the



conclusion, that, as it is more than three years since she has seen my mother, she can come with perfect security. They want a child in the house, she says. And then, hereafter, when we came on in Mr. Mayfield's vacations, we would be at no loss, she said; the child could come with us. This was what my father said. Would I have believed he would be the one to propose it? But he was; and she could see that his heart was in it. "Perhaps she would be contented to stay with us some, when Anna is away," he said, with a look that made her pity him.

Horace was gone; had been gone two days; so he wasn't there to get the shock of Mr. Mayfield's announcement. For it would, of course, have troubled him at first. But he was one to get over it quick. Or, the way he did, was, to get over things and get into things, back and forth, back and forth, ten times, perhaps a hundred times, before he was fairly through with it. In that way, it took him a long time to get fairly through with a thing. He thought a good deal of Alice, she could see; and, unless she was greatly mistaken, Alice thought quite as much of him. She wished it could all have been right for him to marry me; but, on one account, she was reconciled to its being Alice, if it turned out so; and even pleased—Alice knew nothing of the past; probably never would know anything of it; and this was better if she was ever to marry him. Did I not think so?

Some days ago, I received one of Alice's letters. "I can't help writing to you," she said, "to tell you that Mr. Roosevelt is gone; only, he says he isn't *your* Mr. Roosevelt, hasn't been for a long time. I couldn't help believing him, he looked so—so I don't know how, so 'cut up,' as he says. But he was bright the very next minute after he had said, with such a sober face, that he didn't belong to anybody; the very same minute that my heart was pitying him and aching, he began to laugh and joke me about having lost my office. I didn't know what he meant, and I was so puzzled! I teased him to tell me what he meant! He kept laughing, as he always does, when he has puzzled one, when one teases and pretends to pout; and at last I guessed that he meant my office of bridesmaid. Then I pouted at the loss; finally we had a lively time; but I am sure I don't understand it. I teased him to tell me how it happened; and he said he wasn't fit for you. Before I thought what I was going to say, I said, 'That couldn't be it. You were good enough for the best, to be sure; but neither you nor he could think that—that——' and here

I was stopped by seeing his color rise, and the pleased look I've seen before, coming to his face. But he thanked me; he had caught what I was going to say; he thanked me and looked pleased. What *does* it mean? I'm afraid you won't tell me, you're so close in everything that concerns him! Won't he?—is he unwilling to have you tell? I *wish* I knew!

"He went this very day. I felt as though all Boscawen had gone. I do now. You must forgive me for saying it; but even your coming seems but little to me now—unless you will tell me something. I shall watch you like a Jesuit, if you don't tell me like my friend and cousin as you are.

"They say, over to your house, that you are coming soon. Heigho! I wish I was coming, or going, or that something would happen to me some way.

"I wonder if he (Mr. Roosevelt, I mean) will really come back early in the spring. He said he probably should. I am afraid he won't think he can meet you. Oh! dear! I find I am just afraid and jumbled up and full of curiosity from head to foot. I think this is a wretched world to be born into, on the whole. I don't see how I am going to get through with the whole of it, I am sure I don't!

"I wonder how you feel about marrying such a great man as Mr. Mayfield. I am glad not to be in your place this time. I wonder what kind of a wife I would make for such a man!

"Write if you feel like it."

Rose, Donna, and I will go to-morrow. Rose sits on the carpet at my feet, neatly packing all her little toys and keepsakes into one compartment of her portmanteau. Silence and application do not agree with her; she looks tired and very grave.

## CHAPTER XL.

*Boscawen Plain, December 18th.*

ALICE came in to-day, when I was sewing: she began dragging my work over in my hands, and said, "Making pillow-cases—fine linen pillow-cases—who would have thought, last July, or even in September, that in December, early in December, you would be making pillow-cases to be married to a man away off in Philadelphia? It beats *all*, I think!"

She spoke with bitterness; but, remembering how many times I, too, had felt bitterness when everything seemed to be going wrong with me, I instantly forgave it. I smiled with the friendliness I really felt toward her; but, for awhile, I got no friendly smile in return. On the con-

trary, she looked bitterer than before; and tossing a corner of my work from her, said, "I think it beats *all*!" and, after a pause, "Where do you suppose Mr. Roosevelt can be? What do you suppose can have become of him?"

"I didn't know, I was sure," I told her. "But probably we would soon know. Probably he would soon be settled down at New Orleans, for the winter; then we, she and I, would have chances to send friendly, cheerful messages to him."

"Ha! yes!" she answered, brightening, laughing. "Ha! I'll send him the funniest message he ever had yet! I've got a new charade, just out! I've no idea he's seen it; for, poor fellow! I dare say he has no heart for charades in these days. I know what I'll do: I've got a little crazy French motto and device, that don't mean one thing, but that pretends to be as wise as the Koran. I shall seal with that, and then won't he puzzle and work? Only, what a fool I am! as if I were really going to write to him myself! as if such a thing as this could ever happen, here in these United States, or anywhere. I'm a downright little fool! Of course, at the most, I shall only send him some distant, respectful message by you when you write. But I would so like to write a few words, just to give him that new, difficult charade, may I?"

"Yes, indeed! I would like to have you; it will give him pleasure."

"Perhaps! I guess it will, for he likes such things. Only, oh! dear!" giving the slender, nervous fingers a wring, "I suppose he'll go into the *blues* so deep, reading your letter, and thinking what he has lost, that he'll just say 'Trumpery!' to my poor charade, and crumple it and throw it away. If I only knew which broke it off—the engagement, I mean—you or he! but I know it was you. You had met this Mr. Mayfield, and——"

"You are mistaken, Alice!" I replied. "Until after it was all over between Roosevelt and myself, I believed Mr. Mayfield already married. It was his brother's wife who was with him; but I thought it was his own. I had not met either of them——"

"Ah, pardon me!" begged she. "I was mean to say that to you, when you never say an ill-natured thing to me, let me do or say what I will. But now *won't* you tell me whose fault it was, breaking off? that is, whose wish it was?"

"Both his and mine, as things were," I replied. "We both saw it necessary and best, as things were."

"But he was terribly troubled."

"And so was I," pain coming over from that

time of trouble, to smite and sicken me, even then.

"Oh! but I don't know," said she, with immense dissatisfaction in her tones and looks. "I suppose he won't come back here until you are gone. When will you be married?"

"I didn't know, I told her.

"Not till you get these sheets and pillow-cases done, I suppose, at any rate. Gracious! let me have a thimble!" throwing back her shawl. "Let me help you!" she laughed, but she was not good-natured.

She dragged things out of my basket to find implements, dragged the pile of work on the table over, to find the very pillow-case she wanted, did it laughing, saying that "she thought that it was pretty well to have so many fine linen pillow-cases!" and then she fell to work, taking long, irregular stitches; and, as soon as she saw how long and irregular they were, pulling them all out again, vexed with herself and wretchedly out of tune. Then she started up, said, "I'm going!" in the doorway made me a very low bow, with a very cloudy face, saying, "Success to you! Good-bye! I ain't coming in here again till I'm better-natured than I am now. When I shall come, nobody knows."

She returned, after she had once shut the door, with a face considerably brighter, to say, "Only, be sure you let me know when you hear from Mr. Roosevelt. When you write to him, be sure and let me know. *Au revoir*!"

My father and mother have gone to Concord to bring home piles of nice fabrics for my house-keeping. Mamma has the largest ideas! and, to them all, my father says, (not often looking at me, but oftener and oftener doing so,) "Yes; there can't be too much done for her. I think as you do, that there can't be too much done for Anna." Something tender, and, as it were, regretful in his voice, touches me; and I long—

"What say, Mrs. Eaton?"

Mrs. Eaton was on her way across the sitting-room, slipping her palms one across the other, saying, "She guessed I would laugh if I saw what a frolic that child of a Rose was having out there with her sled and both of the dogs, her dog, Donna, and our dog, Rover. Rose muffled to the eyes, she said, hands and arms muffled, feet and legs muffled; she looked like a Hindoo, or some of them nations; but she tripped round and frolicked, and run, and slid, like a chicken. Her dog, Donna, zizzed a little, as he always does, when he first sets his feet on the snow; but Rose pitied him and patted him, called him precious Donna; and

by-and-by he got over it a good deal; not so as to hold his head up though, and prick up his ears, and dip his nose and head into the snow, and shake it off, and bark at it, and make Rose laugh at everything he did, like our dog Rover. Our dog Rover was the liveliest dog, after all; and the child seemed to think so; but how she *did* love Donna! And, to be sure, it was a han'some creater; a very han'some, affectionate creater. Wan't it curious to see how my father was taken with the child and the dog? how he watched all their moves; and seemed to like it, when Rose took his large, wide hand in both her little ones, and hung by it, looking up in his face to talk to him, in her way that somehow was like a woman's and like a baby's too? She would tell me what she had got done toward the dinner. She had got the pertaters and onions peeled, had got the squash ready, the meat stuffed and in roasting. I shouldn't have got a roast for dinner to-day, when your father and mother were both gone," she added, "only, I thought perhaps you would like it."

She looked at me with questioning eyes, over her glasses, and I said, "Thank you, Mrs. Eaton."

"Land! don't thank *me*! I feel as though I ought to do everything for you now, while I have the chance, to make up for old times, when I used to be so—I don't know what—so cross to you. I don't know what made me so cross! only a little while, just a few months ago, too! It seems like a dream, or something of that sort, to me, when I see you as you are now, and think how I ordered you round. I'm jest as ashamed as I can be."

"Never mind that, Mrs. Eaton; I tried you; I was often turbulent and strong-willed——"

"Wall, you was! now——"

"Now I have found my way into the light of day; then all was dark and uncertain to me. Others, many others, no doubt, are as much in the dark as I was, only they don't know it as I did, feel it as I did; they keep still and so get no hurts as I did, are troubled by no hindrances, and barriers, as I was. So, as there was no one near to lead me, I was often discouraged, often impatient and hot-willed. And this," I added, smiling to see how she sat with open mouth and strained eyes, to understand me, "this was very trying to you who wanted me to be as systematic as the kitchen clock, and to my father who wanted me to be a lady. But I can hardly say now that I am sorry for it. You have patience with me now——"

"Land! why shouldn't I have, when——"

"My father is satisfied with me now——"

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"*More than satisfied!* he thinks there never was such a *young* person as you are! He thinks your mother is the best person of her age, and that you are the best young person. He has told me so. He thinks everything of you! He ain't sorry, no more'n I am, now, I guess, that you ain't going to marry that scrummage of a Roosevelt!"

"That what, Mrs. Eaton?"

"That scrummage! This is what I allers call him in my own mind, and did, for a long time before he went away; for he was forever scrummaging round under folks' feet, and against folks' shoulders and elbows, trying to get up something to make fun of. Er! I can't bear the sight or sound of him!" And she verily looked as though she could not; as though she were in veritable disgust toward him. "He made fun of me more times than he ever will again; for I'm *sure* of something, and one hint of it somewhere near his ear, will make him glad enough to be respectful. I don't like Alice either, any too well, since she's got so tangled, like, with him. She's always been something of a flutter-budget; but since she's got these notions about him into her head, she's a greater trial to her mother, than anybody can begin to calculate. Folks thought Mrs. Bishop met with a terrible trial when Robin died; and so she did! so she did, indeed! but it wouldn't be strange in my mind, if she takes more comfort now, every day she lives, with her good, quiet, sensible son that's gone, than she does with the uneasy, giddy, uncomfortable daughter that's living. Folks don't allers know which is best, to have friends dead, or to have 'em alive."

I told her I guessed her head ached to-day, and that this made Roosevelt and Alice seem a great deal, a *great* deal worse to her than they really were. They were——

"Er! none of your charity about them, if you please, Anna!" forcing a laugh and rising to go. "My head does ache to-day; and I've noticed that, the days when my head aches, I allers feel out of tune toward somebody, or other; but this don't prove that they don't deserve to be out of tune with, you see, you see! But, I've scolded enough, for once, I s'pose. I s'pose I'd better go and see to my dinner, a great deal. I s'pose you ain't very sorry to have me go, nother, sence I'm so uncharitable."

## CHAPTER XLI.

*The 27th.*

"I HERE take my stitches, iron to glossy smoothness the snowy linens, and lay them in

blue-white piles on the bed, the table, and all the chairs and cushions of the east chamber. I lay my housekeeping plans; think on the air of comfort, order, refinement, and ennobling home occupations I will shed over all our rooms; think how I will keep myself clear of every action, even of every feeling that can hinder me, or drag me downward one step in the mountain way I am to climb toward holiness on earth, holiness in heaven, and he at my side. I think no new stain, or blow, of ever so slight sin, shall evermore be given to my soul, to mar, or defile it any more. For this one thing do I know, with even greater certainty and clearness, that any stain or blow given to the soul, is and must, in a greater or less degree be there, to mar it, forever and forever. Penitence may come, and the rain of many tears; the blood of Christ may be, as it were, shed down upon us while we weep and pray; the tears and the blood may so strengthen and cleanse us, that we will no more commit sin to our dying day, and thus are we forgiven; thus, that is, is sin for the present and the future taken away from us; but not the sin of the past. There it is; there to our dying day, is the stain and the scar of the old hurt on our souls. This I believe; so God forbid—with longings to die rather than live and give my soul any new harm, I say—God forbid that I ever sin! that I ever take one step downward in the mountain life-path I am to ascend, and he, the blessed, the beloved one at my side. I mean Mayfield. The goodness that is in him, the love and desires he has toward heaven, beam out about him, like a crown of light upon the beloved, the beautiful head.

He writes to me every few days; is happier, he says, than he has words to express; is thankful, happy, and humble even unto tears. He was never so happy in his labors; his people were never so dear to him; he looks forward with exultation to the time when he will, as it were, give them to his bride; and, as it were, give his bride to them.

Beloved, good night. I say it to him. Not as I said it one sad night, many months ago, but with my life full of blessedness and love; full of blessedness because full of love; of love, not toward him only, but toward God, heaven, and all life.

## CHAPTER XLII.

*The 29th.*

LETTERS came to mamma and me to-day, from Rosenvelt, at New Orleans. He told mamma who of their common acquaintances are bankrupt, who are married, who are dead; told her

that Kitty Thorem has asked him very prettily to let her sew up all the rips in his gloves, and he has promised her. Then he says, "Poh!" to vent the impatience that had suddenly superseded the frivolity. He wants to see her, he says; is homesick; wishes he had remained at Boscawen Plain; and this is the way it always is with him—when he is in comfortable circumstances, he never knows it, but in some way or other, cuts himself off from them. It would not be strange if he were, any day, to start for the North, he and Leon; for Leon too is homesick.

To me he says, "I must write to you once more, before you are quite lost to me. I have heard on what day I am to be utterly bereaved. My sister, your mamma, blessed girl! told me in her letter to me at Charleston. She told me by what pet names the child calls you; with what kisses and embraces she cleaves to you. Oh! God! if I could but see one of those kisses! and I might have seen them all, might have had my share of them. The lips might have brought straight to mine, the freshness and sweetness of yours, the calmness of yours. Her arms might have brought goodness, truth, peace from you, and laid them on me! But this is the cup I spilled on the ground. One only little drop is left; and this is that she kisses you, and, with her arms about you, her eyes on yours, calls you 'precious!' 'darling!' 'blessed Anna!' For the child is mine; nothing can wipe this out; it is my blood in her veins, warming her kisses and embraces. This is nothing to you; it never comes into your mind; nor would I bring it there, so as to make it anything to you, if I could by turning my hand. I know I would not now that you will so soon belong to another: but to me it is something of which I cannot forbear writing, especially as it is so soon to be over. I shall allow myself no more of it, from the hour that gives you utterly to another.

"Anna, Anna, I am wretchedly cut up to-night! I'm nervous! 'Sounds of the days that are no more' fill the room like real voices; I shudder and am sick. I shudder thinking of poor, poor Clara, I am sick with my longing for the comfort of being where you are, of seeing you, hearing you, touching you; am sickest of all, thinking that this might have been, if I had but listened to the two voices, yours, dear girl, and the accordant one of my own sense of right, of what was truly manly; believing that if I had had the courage to do so, I should this hour have been a man and not a coward and craven; that, this hour, sitting by your side, I should have been looking even at the mournful past, as if it were the face of a

forgiving friend. I could have had comfort in the present; could have opened my heart wide, (a thing I have done but once or twice these ten years,) and let all my best thoughts, all my love and gratitude be poured out toward you, dear, and toward the Great One who had saved me out of my poisoned pool of lies, the moment I consented to be saved. I could have been forever at peace with this memory that is now, and is to be forever, a devouring flame to me. God help me! And yet, clinging to my refuge of lies, as I am doing, I have no right to say, God help me. I have no right to speak to Him or to you, or to hold up my face to the sky, the hills, so long as I cling to this refuge of lies. Only, to God and to you I do not lie; this gives me the assurance to speak to you and to Him; only, only, I remember you said once that every sin against another, every sin against our own souls, is a sin against God; that it is in this way we sin against God, wronging the souls and bodies He has given us, wronging the souls and bodies He has given others. And I suppose it is so. I suppose I am thoroughly accursed. I feel so to-night, at any rate. I feel as though hell were wide open for me. But this suffering would never have come, if charity had abounded there at Boscawen Plain, and elsewhere, as it ought; if people were what they profess to be, followers of Christ. I know this! It took not only my own selfishness, pride, and pusillanimity, but the uncharitableness, also, the foolishness, and narrow-mindedness of others, to bring me where I am, into this suffering and utter confusion as to life; to work out this my utter and perhaps final damnation. Nothing in me would have led me where I am, if I had not been also driven by the deadly tongue. Only, God, or somebody, or something, help me! for, when I said pretty much this same thing to you once, I remember you said that the tongues were sinful enough, but that this belonged to those who wielded them; to you it belonged to be a woman; to me it belonged to be a man; to us both it belonged to be valiant and true, as if there were no narrow, uncharitable hearts, no darting tongues. This is, of course, true; and God, or something, or somebody, help me! I wish He would excommunicate those women with the tongues though! I wonder if He won't do something of the sort. If they go on hissing and thrusting their tongues until death comes and stills them, I wonder if they will go to heaven, as they are expecting to. If they do get in there, I wonder what sort of a seat will be given them. I wonder if it will be at God's right hand where Christ is. I wonder, blessed

girl, if those women will be where you are, in heaven."

## CHAPTER XLIII.

*Philadelphia, April 26th.*

"He torments me to pieces!" wrote Alice, in a letter that came to-day. "Laughs at everything! that is, if there is anything that *can* be laughed at. If there isn't, he's sober, sits sober with his arms on the arms of his chair, and every tip of every finger on one hand, evenly set against every tip of every finger on the other hand: still as if he were a monument, his mind on that hideous secret; or, I can't help thinking so, whenever I see him sitting so long in this manner. Heigho!—a real fretful heigho! one of the most fretful heighos you ever heard from me.

"To-day, Cataraugus (did you ever hear such a queer, homely name for a kitten? He gave it to ours, and she's a little white and black beauty. Or, I think she's a beauty. He can't bear anything but gray or Maltese color. He says sensible, fine-looking kittens wear gray fur, just as sensible, fine-looking women wear gray dresses; and this vexed me, of course; for I know of one lady, and so do you, who almost always wears gray or drab dresses; I know of another who will never wear them, if she can help it. He keeps bringing home one gray, or drab, or brown thing after another, to me, splendid fabrics! rich enough to stand alone, trying to find something that will suit me. I had two splendid silks, one drab and the other fawn-color, made up while we were in New York; I put them on and tried to wear them; but I felt exactly as if I was a mummy, or nun, or Shaker; I was ashamed of myself; I didn't know what to do with my arms, and was so awkward! Oh! dear me! I pulled them off quick enough, the moment we got home to our chambers; and he laughed, and couldn't help it, to see me scramble so; but he was a little vexed too; he scolded me a little. It's strange! in rose-colors, especially if the fabrics suit me, I am often in a little tremor of delight. I could kiss myself; I do kiss my arms, sometimes—all which I tell you, to show you what I am and can't help being—although, I suppose, I needn't have said it all *par parenthese*.) I was going to tell you that to-day Cataraugus scratched my hand, (on the very back of it, where it shows every minute,) and he laughs; laughs now, where he sits; does nothing but laugh, every time he looks at the red lines an inch long, and at me, to see how ashamed I am, how I hide them, and pout, and scold. And this afternoon, when I was out in the garden walk, looking

to see how the pinks grow every day, (and I wanted to get out of his way, too, although I thought and told him that poor Cataraugus would have to take it, if he didn't do the other thing that he does, set his finger-tips together, &c.,) but what do you think he did and made me do? I heard him yawn, a great long yawn; then he rattled the chairs together, on his way out; then he came, his whole face merry even then, thinking that he was going to plague me; got hold of my hand—the scratched one, so that it hurt me—and then he ran and took me after him, as fast as I could *possibly* run, doing my best, running my fastest, awkwardest, out through the yard, and down the sidewalk, almost to Mr. Quimby's, before he stopped; I, of course, doing my best to stop myself, pulling back, trying to brace my feet, and saying, 'Don't! don't! do behave!' he looking back as he ran, to see me scrawling after, and saying that he *was* behaving! And I thought he was! I was really angry! I didn't forgive him, and wouldn't, for a long time. The way he teased me and asked me to forgive him, (it was his tormenting way,) made me the more determined I wouldn't.

"I'm afraid of him; I don't dare to stir, I'm having such a nice time, now he's still, to write my letter. He is by the west window, not looking out, sober, looking at his finger-tips, as he holds them together. I don't dare to let him know that I am noticing how still he is; I don't dare to move in my chair; for he'll come out of the stillness, and, as Mrs. Eaton says, 'tackle' me if I do anything to—now, mercy on me! he has caught my eye! he yawns, (one of his *made* yawns; half his yawns are made; did they use to be?) now he is singing,

"'If he's gone, let him go, let him sink, let him swim;  
'Tis I can do without him, so if he's gone, farewell him.'

He repeats, 'So if he's gone, farewell him,' and laughs, looking at my face, I have no doubt. 'Tis one of the scraps that I sing now and then, you remember, silly as can be; I always knew it was silly, but it was smart too, and in some of my moods I liked to sing it and do now. *How* the man laughs! he—

"He left off laughing, when he found that I didn't stop for him, drew a piece of paper off his table and began tearing it to pieces, looking down on it, as if it was a thoughtful business; and by-and-by he said, 'You were graceful this afternoon, running. I don't believe I ever saw you quite so graceful; I advise you to run so, often.'

"Run so, often! Did you ever hear the like out of a man's head, Anna? I tried not to stop

writing; tried not to let my face change; but, I suppose, he saw that I was half-amused, half-vexed; for he laughed and laughed; it seemed as though he would never be done; he laughed the more, seeing how it worked me up. Wouldn't you think he'd be ashamed?

"*Later.*—I stopped and asked him if he wasn't ashamed to do nothing but laugh and make fun of Leon or me, from morning till night? (He was turning Leon's ears wrong side out then, laying them back on his head, so that they would stay so, and laughing to see how queer he looked, how ashamed he was.) Wasn't he ashamed, I repeated, to do nothing but laugh, from morning till night? I didn't think it would touch him; but, for some reason, it did. He threw all his bits of paper out the window and said, Yes, he was! It was a miserable life to live! No one could be a *man*, living such a life! The fact was, he must go into business again! And then he said he would have no stirring motive for that, probably no interest in it, since he had property enough without it. Heigho! he said, heigho! this was a stupid world. He said he thought we'd better go traveling; we'd better go to New York, stay there through May, and then go off by Niagara and Canada way. He could think of nothing else to do, he said. I was sorry to hear him say it, I am so lonesome traveling away from home, where mother is; but it is dull here. I don't blame him for wanting to go; but, the discouraging thing about it, is, that when we are traveling, he yawns, calls it 'an old story to him,' gets tired as he can be, and out of tune. To Canada will be a new route, and this is why he wants to go there. I think that old secret troubles him. I asked Mrs. Eaton, one day, carelessly as I could, if she had found out anything more than she told us, one time? She gave her head that ugly, cross toss of hers, and said she had found out *all* about it. 'Good! then she must tell me,' I said. 'Hum! it was something it wouldn't do me much good to hear! or give me any great pleasure! It was something she should tell everybody else, before she should tell me!' I asked her if she *liked* Horace. 'No!' she said; and that was all I could get out of her then. Another time, when I told her she *should* tell me why she didn't like him, she said he had plagued her enough to make anybody hate him; and there was something else; but this something she should never tell me. She should tell everybody else before she should tell me! Isn't this provoking, when it is the only thing in the world I want to know?

"Your father and mother seem contented; it

is a sight worth looking at, to go in there and see how contented they look. When I said so to them both, one day, with my tears rising to choke me, (because I haven't the same content,) they said they had reason to be contented. They had a pleasant home; and you and your happy lot to think of; had your visit and the child's—as they called Rose—to look forward to, and so on. They *praised* you, as they have reason to. I say this now without envy. Once I thought you were more noble than I was, more calm and dignified, because you were richer, and were going to be the wife of such a man as Horace seemed to me to be, and I envied you. Now I am a great deal richer than you, I suppose, and have him for my husband; but it all turns to nothing, because I, in my own heart and life, am so tossed and jumbled! I try to get over this; I cry; once I tried to do as you told me to do—to pray. But it don't seem to me to amount to anything. The prayer seems to me to come back and lodge in my heart and sink it more and more. I am afraid it is because my prayers are so selfish and mean. I'm afraid—I *know* that I don't pray for the sake of being inwardly better, so much as for the sake of being inwardly and outwardly happier. Alas! alas! alas!"

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## CHAPTER XLIV.

*May 2nd.*

We were riding out Laurel Hill way to-day, where there are hills like the dear New England hills, little brooks like the dear New England

brooks, and violets blue and white, like the New England violets, growing beside them. Rose gathered a handful; was very still and grave doing so, and did not say what she was gathering them for. Now she sits on a low cushion beside me and twines them into three beautiful little wreaths; and Donna watches her with his bright eyes. She parts his curls and puts them back, that he may see without obstruction; but if he tries to have a part with her, as in most things she allows him, she says gravely, "No, little Donna. Donna mustn't. Donna don't know what this is for; he don't know that the men are dead that wrote those books, and he mustn't do anything about it. Poor little Donna don't know!"

The beloved head bends low in the completest abstraction, over the books, pamphlets, and manuscripts with which his wide table and the chair beside him are spread and piled. "The beloved head," I said, one time, months ago, I remember, believing that I already knew the full tenderness and comfort of the words. Since then the head has come many, many times to my bosom to rest, when it was weary; when it was not weary, to dream its dream of love and comfort; my heart has many, many times been filled even to aching with thankfulness, with blessings on the head so resting, and now I can conceive no greater love, no higher blessedness—especially, as God has all the time been near us both, to exalt the sentiment, to make it fit to lie at the earthly heart, on the earthly head, because fit to lie at His feet.

## THE COVERED HEART.

BY ANNE MATILDA WILSON.

ALICE CAMPION, the orphan heiress, had long cherished in secret a timid passion for Roland Home, which, however, he was slow to divine. Rumor explained this by reference to a proud, but rarely beautiful woman, well known in certain circles, and with whose name Roland Home's had been often associated, in times gone by. Yet, whatever mystery might attach to that ruptured connection, Alice certainly found no fault with the late devotion of her suitor; but, on the contrary, his marriage tenders were joyfully accepted, and the day even hastened, in meek compliance with his grave solicitation—a fact by no means singular, when one considers the attractive person of Roland Home, the fineness of his manners, as well as a certain silence of demeanor likely to have great weight with impressible women; since, representative of passionate and mysterious power, it has all the strangeness of the sublime, with none of its attending pain. But sometimes it is only the veil of Charlatanism, and only covers vacuity; yet hardly in the present case, for Roland Home carried on his brow the traces of manly thought, and his lips, with all their willfulness, had the melancholy significance of passion—passion gone astray, perhaps, but human passion still.

Meanwhile the nuptials were gay and brilliant, since neither expense nor invention were spared to grace suitably this union of beauty and genius. Alternate smiles and blushes illumined the fair face of the bride, dimly visible under fleecy lace and flowers, as a star dawning from the mist. Happiness has virtue to bring out beauty, even from a plain face; and on this special occasion it so transfigured Miss Campion's girlish figure, that some superstitious individuals, clustering in a shadowed embrasure of the hall, were heard to whisper inauspiciously of "dying flashes," and of that ominous exhilaration sometimes said to attend the foredoomed; while others again, declared that Alice impressed them with the idea of a triumphant soul treading the way to paradise.

How her light feet twinkled in the dance, timing deeper music than that of the orchestra! And how sweet the laugh pealing in sudden joy, as if it were "a joy forever!"

Yet Roland looked on, grave and pale, and

the circle of silence around him rather widened than narrowed. It might be the silence of profound happiness, of mournful regrets, or of changeless resolution; nevertheless it was silence, deep and awful, and every one present, except Alice, so felt it, particularly when the disposition of his right hand was observed; for strangely enough he carried it in his bosom, over his heart, nor withdrew it during the evening, an action too eccentric to escape remark; hence the many rumors pretending to account for it.

One asserted the hand had been burned off in ministering to some proud caprice of Ida Hallam's; another declared Roland to be the victim of an incurable malady of the heart, whose paroxysm of pain he vainly sought to mitigate by extraneous pressure; while others, no better informed, maintained that the hand was there to moderate violent joy, which may be as destructive to the springs of life as pain; and again others were not wanting, who, from an action so trivial, drew evil augur for the future felicity of the newly wedded; for everywhere there are persons to whom all things have a malign aspect, who absorb darkness instead of sunshine, and so live, croaking like the raven, from the abundance of their own night. And, after all, Roland Home's hand upon his heart might be only an unconscious habit, to which his prominent share in the evening's ceremony had first drawn attention.

However that may be, it did not escape the eyes of the bride. Yet Alice was less affected than others with its strangeness. She only thought it added strikingly to the effect of his noble person, producing a yet stronger impression of collected and sustained manhood, not surpassed by any previous attitude of his she could remember. She was not even dismayed, when, after passing the ring to the minister, with his disengaged left hand he joined hers with the same, pronouncing the eternal vow of love, in a voice, whose hollowness must have struck warning to any heart less preoccupied than her own. But Alice was only conscious of her own exceeding fullness, and happily had no thought beyond, "I am his, and he is mine," which the occasion might well justify.

Yet surprise and pain grew in her bosom,



when, in the bridal tour that followed, the hand was not withdrawn. If he caressed her, that mute, unintelligible member was always there, chilling and thrusting her back with a strange power. And, even if she rested in his bosom, the hand was still between, like a thick wall through which heart could not answer unto heart: so silence fell between them; for Alice could not forget the dreary, intervening hand: and yet that was the one theme upon which her lips sealed themselves. She could not shape into speech the deathly fear that possessed her, she had no words for the vague misgivings of her soul.

I have said she could not forget; yet this would sometimes happen, as once, when wandering with Roland, in a peaceful valley, embosomed like a nest of greenery, in the bend of a silvery river, she cried, with passionate yearning,

"Oh! if it were possible for the water to wind around, and lock us here, forever, from the rest of the world!" To which his absent smile must have been sufficiently chilling, without the pain of a more unmistakable reply.

"Wish no such isolation, at least for me, Alice; it would be slow death."

And his eye dropping, she remembered the covered heart, and was silent again, knowing it would be, indeed, as he said; so the wish went out in the very moment of its kindling and never flickered again.

It was not long before a feeling came over her, as if the doors of her home were locked—a feeling which grew and strengthened when the two were fairly established in the quiet and security of the noble old country house, descending upon Alice with the remainder of her patrimony; and whither her husband's sister, at his earnest invitation, had likewise come to live.

Elvira Home, in many respects, strongly resembled her brother. Tall, dark, and grave, she had the same high lineaments, the same mysterious sweetness haunting the willful mouth; with the same full, melancholy eyes. But Elvira's contained more intensity than his: indeed this was so much the case that her presence was oppressive to weak and nervous organizations.

Alice instinctively shrunk from her. She knew not why. Possibly Elvira made no effort to win the confidence of her young sister-in-law; for she was taciturn in common with most thoughtful natures. But, however that may be, the two lived entirely apart, not estranged, since they had never been together, but removed like souls in separate spheres; for Elvira

was strong and self-sufficient, while Alice was a human ivy, weak, and clinging to every support within reach that did not positively repel.

Not unfrequently Alice beheld Elvira's intense gaze riveted upon Roland, and especially it dwelt upon the covered heart; after which she never failed, herself, to become the subject of those bright and searching eyes, in which sorrow and compassion, with something of scorn, forever blended. Often and again she would think to evade that gaze, whose secret sympathy, with its still disdain, grew insufferably painful at last. Yet ever it searched her out, as with a sort of fearful magnetism, constraining her to look up and face it like an ugly truth. In truth, in occasional losses of feverish thought, both those eyes of Elvira's seemed to melt into one large, luminous orb, which, shining from the centre of her forehead, presented a clear and mirror-like surface, in whose depths, brokenly reflected, would appear the dreadful mystery of the covered heart; yet ever before she could pluck it up from its drowning depths, diving back again, it would be swiftly lost, like a dolphin, sunning himself for a moment on the surface of the ocean, and then buried beneath the broken brightness of the waters almost as soon as seen; whilst nothing remained behind but a pair of intelligent eyes, with which Alice could but wonder, as they bent over book or drawing, that her wild fancy had taken such liberty; and a sense of intolerable pain, sinking all the more deeply that it was nameless and unspoken.

Neither was Elvira's the only face that cast a troublous shadow on Alice's life. True, the other was but seen at long intervals, and yet, glancing past her in giddy dances, in picture gallery, church, or street, it was lighted with the triumph of an eye avenging ancient wrong, speaking more plainly than in words,

"I wish you joy of your covered heart, Alice Home."

After which Alice was sure those eyes, at some time or other, had been permitted to look into the covered heart, and if they would, could tell her more than she knew. Yet that fair woman never crossed Roland Home's threshold, nor was her name ever spoken in his house. But unspoken names are none the less present. And most likely Alice had some such vague thought, as sitting apart in silence and shadow, which all the ruddy glow of the evening fire could not light up, she would hear Roland and Elvira speak strange words, to whose meaning she could attain by no effort of thought. And after which Elvira's smile would seem to say,

"You cannot comprehend us. We are a peculiar and sacred family—the oldest aristocracy under the sun; whilst you are of the people, born to serve as a hand-maiden. Foolish child! to look so high, it is no union, but an alliance! Bear it as best you may, and let the covered heart alone, nor fret your poor brain with our strange speech; for you will never know it—never!" The great chambers drearily echoing, "Never! never!"

"Aspire not after us, poor child! It is as great a gulf as that between Dives and Lazarus. At the castle of gods we are fed by invisible priests—warmed at a greater altar than the sun's; and knowing a ministry more virginal than moon and stars, we rise in our growth till the lark is a speck beneath us, and his song a far away echo. Can you make wings of your jewels to follow? Gold is good, and it is power; but will it satisfy hunger? King Midas starved on gold, and gold is your gift—gold, gold!" So significant a smile may be! and yet unanswerable. And what gave peculiar poignancy to this smile was, that when Roland would dwell on some heroic deed, his kindling eyes forever sought Elvira's in sympathy, passing by Alice like a shadow; so, also, when he had a thought to communicate, it was to her that he turned for answer. Whilst Elvira, whenever she liked, might come in and out of the dim, west chamber, wainscoted with oak, and lined to the ceiling with dark volumes, and huge folios, in strange characters, where Roland passed his days; but whither, if Alice stole sometimes from her dreary self, she must needs feel the weight of a loneliness more awful than elsewhere, in the presence of the great dead, who, through her husband's forbidding courtesy, seemed to frown her back as an intruder in their august circle. Hence her visits became rarer and rarer, till at last she went no more; though sometimes standing on the outside, in the dark, she would press her pale face against the panes, and gaze in, with consuming eagerness not unmingled with a sort of fearful, shuddering curiosity. On such occasions she never failed to see Roland and Elvira, side by side, bending over some mysterious volume; and once a pale halo playing around, above whose lambent flame their twin heads seemed bursting into resplendent flowers, rare and dazzling beyond anything even in a tropical flora. But delirious fires probably shed their fantastic light on such visions; for Alice was a frail woman, at best, and the covered heart had made sad havoc with her health.

It could have been only fever that gave her courage, at length, to cry,

"Roland, take away the hand and let me see your heart!"

The tones were full of pathetic entreaty. Nevertheless, Roland only replied to it by stroking her brown hair mechanically, and smiling down upon her, as one on a child asking a precocious question, the answer to which would be neither judicious nor comprehensible; still it soothed her for the time, like an anodyne a chronic pain, and she sobbed herself to sleep upon his bosom.

But this could not last; and, again casting herself at his feet, and clinging to him with passionate embraces, she pleaded, piteously,

"Roland! Roland! take away the hand from your heart! It will drive me mad!"

It was a prayer to reach a heart of marble, and accordingly there was rustling and stir under Roland's immaculate linen, as if the hand struggled to release itself.

But Elvira's voice calling from the garden, "Roland!" he pressed it down close again, like a stone moved by some convulsion from beneath; and, as a frown gathered upon his brow, uttered the stern command,

"Never speak of it again!"

The whisper of the tragic voice, sounding like thunder to her terror-stricken ears, so paralyzed her twining arms, that she fell away from him like the arms of a dead woman, and trailed upon the ground, never more to clasp him through all her injured life again.

From that day the brightness went out of her eye, and the rose—the last lingering rose of her brief summer—faded in her cheek. More heavily her step fell upon the garden walk, and more lingering every day, as she came down the broad staircase from her bridal chamber, where Roland's measured kindness struck more fatally than anger could have done.

The house, in the meanwhile, assumed a strange aspect, everything changing its character to her gloom-haunted gaze. The lace draperies floating over the windows in sunny fleeces had a funeral air; the glancing marbles seemed like a family of sisters frozen into stone by her speechless grief; the fountains were fountains of tears flowing in mute sympathy with her passion; whilst the spacious chambers, illuminated with mellow pictures, seemed haunted with shadows, and rustling with unearthly sounds. Now it was of gliding feet; then a flutter, as of soft garments; and again sad, swelling sighs, accompanied with floating melodies, plaintive in their dying sweetness, as the death-song of the swan.

A bird singing in the elm branches, on a

summer's day, seemed at a distance as inconceivable as her own youth; and when a stray gleam of sunshine chanced to slant through the shaded panes of flint glass, it showed her chamber a great grave; whilst in its light she beheld herself the ghost—she was haunting her own inanimate remains. But, perhaps, the strangest hallucination of all was, that Roland Home, the accomplished scholar and gentleman, was no more human, but a man of marble, petrified by his own right hand.

Of course such a notion could only proceed from the hectic with which Alice was slowly consuming; despite sagacious doctors recommending iron, when the iron had already entered her soul.

What careful nurses they placed around her! What vials and what delicacies loaded the table at her bedside! And, above all, how tenderly they shielded her from the autumn winds! she who had lived in Arctic coldness so long. She said they were preparing to bury her before death; and, probably impelled by some such fancy, she contrived, one night, to evade her nurses, and steal away, in her muslin night-robe, and with slipperless feet, to the dim, oaken chamber, where Roland passed so much time. Lifting the latch softly, she saw him within, sitting alone, asleep, in his great velvet-cushioned chair, as insensible to the gliding ghost beside him as to the gusty winds outside ringing such wild and mournful music from the solemn harp-strings attached to the casements of the chamber.

How, indeed, like marble he looked! not a hair stirring on his sculptured brow; not a shadow, not a motion, except as the deep chest heaved with irregular breathing—heaved and fell again with its burden of inexplicable life.

Then it came into Alice's heart, as she bent toward him in overwhelming return of the old passionate love, to lift the hand unknowingly, and see into the covered heart a moment. It was a thought no sooner born than acted upon. And the terrible energy—the energy of despair

—with which she clasped his arm must have inevitably accomplished its purpose, had not—oh! fatal discovery!—the flesh of the two so inseparably knit together, that human strength was powerless to wrench them apart. Why should she clasp her two hands to her face? It was a flash to smite one stronger than Alice—that blinding vision of a woman, with the willow branch waving in fair locks, putting insane memories of Ida Hallam in her head.

But Alice's hot clasp, or the laughter must have disturbed Roland's sleep, for he knitted his brows uneasily, and with a motion of his right arm murmured,

"Closer! closer! that no eye may behold the vultures eating beneath—eating, yet never gorged."

Could it have been the wild, east wind that made her sink so heavily at his feet, winding her silken tresses about her bosom, as if to warm its sudden coldness? For it was thus Roland found her, hours afterward, when he awakened from his long slumber.

"Now you will lift the cover, Roland," cried Elvira, "and face the world with an open eye again. You know the path leading through the meadow, and across the rivulet to where the old cottage stands? And who is coming to meet you from the doorway, her willow changed to palms, and the smile shining as you left it?"

But Roland, shaking his head sadly, pointed to the hushed image beside him.

"The work of destruction is completer in me than in her; and, if I would, I cannot now uncover the heart—see!" and he showed her how the one had become a part of the other. "As for the path to the cottage, it is wild and rank with weeds, and she who is waiting in the doorway is a stranger."

"Nevertheless," said Elvira, when Roland had turned away, "he will sculpture a covered heart upon her monument, as a penitential offering to her manes; and then for the cottage again! A man is a man, and nothing under the sun is everlasting but love."